1509/1243
1509/3116

THE

PRIVATE LIFE

OF THE LATE

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

LATE MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO FRANCE, &c. &c. &c.

Originally written by Himself,
AND NOW TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS PUBLIC LIFE, A VARIETY OF ANECDOTES CONCERNING HIM, BY M. M. BRISSOT, CONDORCET, ROCHEFOUCAULT, LE ROY, &c. &c.

AND THE EULOGIUM OF M. FAUCHET,
CONSTITUTIONAL BISHOP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CALVADOS,
AND A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

Eripuit cœlo fulmen, mox sceptra tyrannis. TURGOT.

A Paris, ce grand homme, dans notre ancien régime, seroit resté dans l'obscurité; comment employer le fils d'un chandelier? LE ROY.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. PARSONS, NO. 21, PATER-NOSTER ROW.
1793.

PREFACE

TO THE

FRENCH EDITION.

I SHALL not enter into an unintereſting detail relative to the manner in which the original manuſcript of theſe memoirs, which are written in the Engliſh language, came into my poſſeſſion. They appeared to me to be ſo intereſting, that I did not heſitate a ſingle moment to tranſlate them into French.

The name of Franklin will undoubtedly become a paſſport to a work of this nature; and the character of truth and ſimplicity, diſcernible in every page, muſt guarantee its authenticity; I have no manner of occaſion to join other teſtimonies.

If, however, any critic chooſes to diſbelieve my aſſertion, and is deſirous to bring the exiſtence of the original manuſcript into doubt, I am ready to verify it, by means of an immediate impreſſion *; but, as I

* Thoſe who may be deſirous of reading the Memoirs of the Private Life of Franklin, in the original, are requeſted to leave their names with Bulſſon, bookſeller, Rue Haute-Feuille, N° 20. The work will be ſent to the preſs as ſoon as there are 400 ſubſcribers. The price is 48 ſols.

am not certain of the ſale of a work written in a foreign language, I cannot publiſh it in any other manner than by means of a ſubſcription, large enough to indemnify me for the money advanced.

That part of the *Memoirs* of Franklin in my poſſeſſion, includes no more than the firſt period of a life, the remainder of which has become illuſtrious by events of the higheſt importance; it terminates at the epoch when, after havng married, he began to render himſelf celebrated by plans and eſtabliſhments of public utility.

It is very poſſible that he may have written more of his hiſtory; for the portion of it which I now preſent to the Public, concludes, according to his own account, with the year 1771.

If this be the caſe, the heirs of that great man will not fail ſome day to publiſh it, either in England or in Pennſylvania, and we ſhall doubtleſs have a French tranſlation, which will be received by the Public with great eagerneſs; but I am perſuaded, that his family will not diſcloſe any other than the moſt brilliant period of his life; that which is connected with the memorable part he acted in the world, both as a philoſopher and a ſtateſman. They will never be prevailed upon to narrate the humble details of his early days, and the ſimple but intereſting anecdotes of his origin, the obſcurity of which, although it enhances the talents and the virtues of this great man, may yet wound their own vanity.

If my conjectures prove right; if the memoirs which they are about to publiſh under the name of Franklin ſhould be mutilated; if the firſt part, ſo eſſential to readers capable of feeling and of judging, ſhould be ſuppreſſed, I ſhall applaud myſelf for having preſerved it; and the world will be obliged to me for having enabled them to follow the early devélopements of the genius, and the firſt exertions of the ſublime and profound mind of a man, who afterwards penetrated the myſtery of electricity, and diſconcerted the ſecret meaſures of deſpotiſm—who preſerved the univerſe from the ravages of thunder, and his native country from the horrors of tyranny!

If I am accidentally miſtaken; if the life of Franklin ſhould appear entire, the Public will ſtill have the advantage of anticipating the intereſting part of a hiſtory which it has long and impatiently expected.

The principal object propoſed by the American philoſopher, in writing theſe memoirs, was to inſtruct poſterity, and amuſe his own leiſure hours. He has permitted his ideas to flow, at the will of his memory and his heart, without ever making any effort to diſguiſe the truth, notwithſtanding it is not always very flattering to his ſelf-love—but I here ſtop; it belongs to Franklin to ſpeak for himſelf.

It will be eaſily perceived, that I have preſerved as much as poſſible the eaſe and ſimplicity of his ſtyle in my tranſlation. I have not even affected to correct the negligence of his language, or to clothe his ſenti-

ments

ments with a gaudy dreſs, for which they have no manner of occaſion; I ſhould have been afraid of bereaving the work of one of its principal ornaments.

As theſe memoirs reach no further than his marriage, I have made uſe of other materials in order to complete ſo intereſting a hiſtory; and I have alſo added a number of anecdotes and remarks relative to this philoſophical American.

THE EDITOR.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

THE Life of the late Dr. Benjamin Franklin is, perhaps, a DESIDERATUM in modern biography; for the manner in which that ſtateſman and philoſopher, although deſtitute of birth, and of fortune, was enabled to ſtruggle into opulence and celebrity, cannot fail to excite the intereſt, and gratify the curioſity of a liberal and enlightened age.

But this work is eſtimable in another point of view; for it may be conſidered as a treatiſe enforcing the love of virtue and of induſtry, diſplaying the advantages ariſing from ſtudy, and exhibiting the moſt eaſy mode of acquiring literary and moral excellence.

Youth will be gratified by the early efforts of our Author's riſing genius, and old age comforted, at beholding that happy ſerenity diſplayed in the latter period of his life.

The Tranſlator would have preſented the world with this volume long ſince, had he not been

been reſtrained by a certain degree of delicacy, mingled with veneration, towards the family of this great man; for on being informed by a reſpectable bookſeller in St. Paul's Church-yard, that the works of Franklin were about to be publiſhed by his grandſon, he with-held the preſent publication for ſeveral months, in expectation of that event.

He begs leave to add, that, throughout the whole work, he has attempted a plain, ſober, unadorned ſtyle, as beſt adapted to convey the Author's ſentiments; and that, in the ſecond part, he has ſupplied ſome erroneous dates, and cancelled a variety of unjuſt reflections which were thrown out in England againſt Dr. Franklin, during the late odious war with America, and but too haſtily adopted by the French Editor.

Feb. 1, 1793.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

CHAP. I. The Author's Reaſons for undertaking the preſent Work—A Diſſertation upon Vanity—Some Account of his Anceſtors—He diſcovers that he is the youngeſt Son of the youngeſt Son for five Generations—Young Franklin is at firſt deſtined for the Church—His Father ſoon after takes him from School, and employs him as an Aſſiſtant in making Candles, &c.—He is deſirous of being a Sailor—Some Account of his youthful Frolics—Becomes greatly attached to Books—Is bound Apprentice to a Printer—Begins to ſtudy Compoſition—Adopts a vegetable Regimen—And is extremely fond of Diſputation - - - Page 1

CHAP. II. Young Franklin is eager to acquire literary Reputation—He ſends ſome anonymous Eſſays to his Brother's News-paper—The Origin of his Averſion to arbitrary Power—He becomes diſcontented with his Situation—Leaves Boſton—Embarks for New-York at the Age of Seventeen—Arrives there, and ſets out ſoon after for Philadelphia—Saves the Life of a Dutchman—A Diſſertation concerning the Pilgrim's Progreſs, written by the celebrated John Bunyan—Our Author cures himſelf of a Fever by drinking cold Water—Some Account of Dr. Brown—Arrival in Philadelphia. - 26

CHAP. III. Franklin arrives at Philadelphia, deſtitute both of Money and Friends—He purchaſes ſome Bread, which he eats in the Street—In this Situation he has a Glimpſe of his future Wife—He is employed in a Printing-houſe—Some Account of Keimer his Maſter—He becomes acquainted with the Governor of Pennſylvania—Goes back to Boſton—Returns to Philadelphia—Is accompanied by Collins—Their Quarrel and Separation - - - - 38

CHAP. IV.

CHAP. IV. Our Author ſpends a Sum of Money entruſted to his Care—Curious Anecdote relative to Cod-Fiſh—Project for eſtabliſhing a new Sect—Some Account of a vegetable Diet—A poetical Conteſt—He is ſtill patroniſed by the Governor—Departs from Philadelphia—Is groſsly deceived by his Patron—Arrives in London—Preſents his Letters of Credit—Is extremely uneaſy relative to his future Conduct in Life—Some Account of Governor Sir William Keith Page 57

CHAP. V. The Author leads a diſſipated Life in London—He lodges in the ſame Houſe with Ralph—Makes love to his Miſtreſs—Becomes Author, and writes a metaphyſical Work in anſwer to Wollaſton—Is introduced to Dr. Mandeville, Author of the Fable of the Bees—Some Account of that Gentleman—Removes to another Printing-houſe—Drinks Water only, and is yet ſtronger than ſuch of his Companions as drink Beer—Enacts ſeveral wholeſome Laws among his Fellow-workmen—Ingenious Diſſertation on the Folly of ſwallowing ſtrong Beer—Anecdotes of a Nun—His Excellence in the Art of Swimming—He is engaged as a Merchant's Clerk, and returns to Philadelphia - - 74

CHAP. VI. Our Author meets Governor Sir William Keith, on his Return to Philadelphia—He hears that Miſs Read is married—Sickneſs and Death of Mr. Denham—He changes his Situation once more, and becomes a Printer again—Some Account of an Oxford Scholar—Diſpute with Keimer—Reconciliation—Paper Money—He removes to Burlington—Hiſtory of Iſaac Decon, Inſpector General of New Jerſey—Project of an Eſtabliſhment—A Diſſertation on Morality and Religion—He begins to doubt his metaphyſical Principles—Reſolves to act with Honeſty in all his Dealings - 93

CHAP. VII. Our Author ſets up in Buſineſs—Some Account of the Cynic Mickle—Eſtabliſhment of a political and philoſophical Club—He reſolves to publiſh a News-paper—His Scheme is betrayed by a quondam Friend—He pays Vernon the Sum of Money ſo long due—Experiences new Embarraſſments—Generoſity of two of his Friends—Diſſolution of his Partnerſhip with Meredith—Some Obſervations relative to the Utility of Paper Money—He opens a Stationer's Shop—His extraordinary Prudence, Economy, and Aſſiduity—He is at length united to Miſs Read—He plans a public Library 108

PART II.

CHAP. I. Franklin begins to diſtinguiſh himſelf as Conductor of the Pennſylvania Gazette—He becomes acquainted with Mr.

Mr. Whitefield—Eſtabliſhment of the Philoſophical Society of America—Experiments in Electricity—Diſcovery tending to demonſtrate the Identity of Lightning and the Electric Fluid—Electric Kite—Metallic Conductors—Mode of preſerving Houſes from the deſtructive Effects of Lightning—Advice to thoſe unacquainted with the Nature of the Electric Fluid - - - - - Page 131

CHAP. II. Our Author begins to be conſulted upon public Affairs—Letters to Governor Shirley—He propoſes an Union between England and her Colonies—He aſſiſts the Britiſh Government during the War with France, and takes the Field in Perſon againſt the Enemy—His Influence on the Negotiations that were terminated by the Peace of Paris—He was forced, as well as the reſt of his Countrymen, into the Scheme of Independence—The Succeſs of the American Arms favourable perhaps to Britiſh Liberty - 143

CHAP. III. He becomes a Member of the Aſſembly of Pennſylvania—Is appointed Agent to ſeveral of the American States—Sails for England—Is examined before a Committee of the Privy Council—Inſulted by the Attorney General—Departs privately for America - - - 158

CHAP. IV. The Doctor, ſoon after the Battle of Lexington, writes circular Letters to all the Colonies---Copy of a Letter to Mr. Strahan, a Printer and Member of Parliament---The Americans are in want of Money, Arms, and Ammunition ---Emiſſion of Paper Money---The Views of the People and their Leaders---General Lee a ſtaunch Republican---The Congreſs declares the United States independent---The Doctor, at the Age of Seventy, repairs to France --The Succeſs of his Miſſion---His great and important Services to America---His Return to his native Country - 162

CHAP. V. Dr. Franklin arrives in Philadelphia amidſt the Acclamations of his Fellow-citizens---Is elected Governor of Pennſylvania---Aſſiſts at the General Convention---Speech on the Concluſion of the New Conſtitution---The Effect of early Habits and Attachments - - 174

CHAP. VI. Effects of Temperance---Dr. Franklin's Health becomes infirm---He is ſeized with a Fever---Dies in conſequence of an Impoſthume---Character---Opinions concerning Death---Legacies---Teſtimonies of Foreigners reſpecting his philoſophical Labours---Burial---Account of the Honours paid to his Memory---Liſt of his Works---Epitaph 180

PART

PART III.

Collection of Fragments, Anecdotes, &c. &c. relative to Dr. Franklin - - - - - Page 193

Eulogium on Dr. Franklin by M. de la Rochefoucault - 237

Obſervations on the generally prevailing Doctrines of Life and Death: In a Letter from Dr. Benjamn Franklin to M. Dubourg, the French Tranſlator of his Works - 249

Letter from Dr. Franklin to Benjamin Vaughan, Eſq. on the Criminal Laws, and the Practice of Privateering 252

Letter from Dr. Franklin to Madame B——, written at Paſſey near Paris - - - - - 262

Eulogium on Dr. Franklin, by the Abbé Fauchet - 267

Tranſlation of a Letter from M. Le Roy to the Abbé Fauchet (now conſtitutional Biſhop of Calvados), relative to the late Dr. Franklin - - - - 304

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

THE

PRIVATE LIFE

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

The Author's Reaſons for undertaking the preſent Work—A Diſſertation upon Vanity—Some Account of his Anceſtors—He diſcovers that he is the youngeſt Son of the youngeſt Son for five Generations—Young Franklin is at firſt deſtined for the Church—His Father ſoon after takes him from School and employs him as an Aſſiſtant in making Candles, &c.—He is deſirous of being a Sailor—Some Account of his youthful Frolicks—Becomes greatly attached to Books—Is bound Apprentice to a Printer—Begins to ſtudy Compoſition—Adopts a vegetable Regimen—And is extremely fond of Diſputation.

MY DEAR SON,

I HAVE lately amuſed myſelf with collecting ſome little anecdotes concerning our family. You muſt remember the enquiries that I made among ſuch of my relations as remained alive, when you were with me in England, as well as the journey I undertook for that purpoſe. As I conceive that it muſt be agreeable to you, to be acquainted with all the circumſtances of my life and origin, many particulars of which are at preſent unknown to you, I

now mean to commit them to paper for your information. It ſhall be the occupation of a week's uninterrupted leiſure, which I promiſe myſelf in my preſent rural retirement. Beſides, there are other powerful motives, which impell me to this undertaking. From amidſt the poverty and obſcurity in which I was born, and in which I paſſed my early years, I have raiſed myſelf to a ſituation of opulence, and to ſome ſhare of celebrity in the world. An uninterrupted ſeries of good fortune has accompanied me, even to an advanced period of life; my poſterity will therefore perhaps be gratified in learning the means which I have employed, and which, thanks to the aſſiſtance of Providence, have ſo well ſucceded with me. They may alſo derive ſome uſeful hints from my experience, ſhould they ever find themſelves in ſimilar circumſtances.

This good fortune, when I reflect ſeriouſly on it, which is frequently the caſe, has ſometimes induced me to ſay, that if the offer were made to me, I would again engage to travel over the ſame courſe, from the beginning to the end. I ſhould only deſire the privilege of an author in a ſecond edition, to correct ſome of the errors of the firſt. I ſhould likewiſe wiſh, were it in my power, to alter ſome particular incidents and events of my life, for more favorable ones. However, if this condition were refuſed me, I ſhould nevertheleſs conſent to begin again. But ſince to repeat life is impoſſible, that which in my opinion moſt nearly reſembles it, is to recall all its particular circumſtances, and to render the remembrance

of

of them the more durable, by committing them to writing. In employing myſelf thus, I ſhall yield to the inclination ſo pleaſing to old men, to talk of themſelves and their own actions; and I ſhall indulge it without being burdenſome to thoſe, who, from reſpect to my age, might think themſelves obliged to liſten to me, as it will be always in their option either to read or not, as they pleaſe. In truth, I may as well confeſs (as nobody would believe me if I ſhould deny it,) that perhaps I may in this gratify my ſelf-love. I hardly ever heard any perſon pronounce this preparatory phraſe: *I may ſay it without flattering my vanity, &c.* without its being immediately followed by ſome ſtrongly marked ſtroke, characteriſtic of that very vanity which they ſeemed deſirous to deprecate.

The generality of men deteſt this foible in others, however large a portion of it they themſelves may poſſeſs. For my own part, I pardon it wherever I find it, perſuaded that it is advantageous to the individual whom it influences, as well as to all thoſe who come within its ſphere of action. Conſequently it would, in many caſes, be by no means abſurd, that a man ſhould conſider his vanity among the comforts of his life, and give thanks to Providence that he is endowed with it.

And in this place let me acknowledge in all humility, that to Divine Providence I attribute the happineſs I have hitherto enjoyed. It alone has preſented to my mind all the means that I have made uſe of, and has influenced their ſucceſs. My belief

in this reſpect induces me to hope, although I ought by no means to depend upon it, that the divine goodneſs will be continued towards me, either in prolonging my good fortune to the termination of my life, or in granting me ſtrength to ſupport any unfortunate reverſe which may happen to me, as it has to ſo many others. My future fate is known to Him alone, who holds our deſtiny in his hands, and who can convert our very afflictions into the ſources of our greateſt happineſs.

One of my uncles, deſirous like myſelf of collecting anecdotes relative to our family, gave me ſome notes, from which I have extracted ſeveral circumſtances concerning our anceſtors. From theſe I learn that they lived in the village of Eaton, in Northamptonſhire, on a freehold of about thirty acres, during at leaſt three hundred years. My uncle could not diſcover how long they had reſided there prior to that period. It is probable they had continued ever ſince the time when, in imitation of their fellow citizens all over the kingdom, who then began to aſſume particular names, they took that of Franklin, which previouſly denominated a peculiar claſs of people.

This inconſiderable property would not have ſufficed for their ſubſiſtance, had it not been for the occupation of a blackſmith, which continued in the family down to my time, the eldeſt ſon being always brought up to that trade; a cuſtom which both my uncle and my father followed, with reſpect to their eldeſt ſons.

Among

Among the enquiries I made at Eaton, I found no account of their births, marriages, or deaths, prior to the year 1555, as the pariſh-regiſter extends no farther back than that period. I learned from it however, that I was the youngeſt ſon of the youngeſt ſon for five generations. My grandfather, Thomas, who was born in the year 1598, lived at Eaton till he was too old to continue his buſineſs, and then retired to Banbury in Oxfordſhire, to the houſe of his ſon John, a dyer, to whom my father was apprentice. There my grandfather died and was buried; we ſaw his tomb-ſtone in 1758. His eldeſt ſon Thomas lived in the family houſe at Eaton, and left it, together with the landed property, to his only daughter, who agreed with her huſband, Mr. Fiſher of Wellingborough, to ſell the whole to Mr. Eſted, the preſent proprietor.

My grandfather had four ſons who lived to be men, namely, Thomas, John, Benjamin, and Joſias. I ſhall mention to you ſuch circumſtances relative to them, as my memory furniſhes me with, not having my papers at hand, in which you will find more particulars, provided they have not been loſt during my abſence.

Thomas had learned the buſineſs of a blackſmith, with my father; but having ſome natural genius, he improved himſelf by ſtudy, in conſequence of the advice of ——— Palmer, Eſq. who was at that time the principal man in the pariſh, and who encouraged all my uncles in the acquiſition of knowledge. Thomas thus enabled himſelf to tranſact the buſineſs of

a ſteward. He ſoon became a man of ſome little conſequence, and was one of the principal projectors of all the public enterpriſes, for the benefit of the county and town of Northampton, as well as for the good of his own village. After having been a good deal noticed and protected by Lord Hallifax, he died on the 6th day of January, 1692, exactly four years before I was born. Could I remember the particulars of his life and character, as related to me by ſome old people in the village, you would be ſurpriſed at the analogy of many parts of them with mine; "Had he died," you would ſay, "four years "later, one would have ſuppoſed that a tranſmigra-"tion had actually taken place."

John I believe was brought up a dyer of woollens.

Benjamin ſerved an apprenticeſhip in London, to a ſilk dyer; he was an induſtrious man. I remember him well, for while I was yet a child he came to join my father in Boſton, and lived ſome time in our houſe. A particular friendſhip ſubſiſted between them, and I was his nameſake; he lived to a very advanced age. He left two manuſcript volumes in quarto, of poetry, of his own compoſition, conſiſting of little fugitive pieces addreſſed to his friends; he had formed to himſelf a ſyſtem of ſhort hand, which he taught me, but having never practiſed it, it has long ſince ſlipped from my memory. He was a pious man, and attended the ſermons of our beſt preachers, which he delighted in taking down in the expeditious mode adopted, if not invented by him, and of theſe he had collected ſeveral volumes. He

was alſo fond of politics, too much ſo perhaps for his ſituation. I lately met in London, with a collection he had made of all the principal political pamphlets, from the year 1641 to 1717. Some part of the ſeries is manifeſtly wanting, but there ſtill remained eight volumes in folio, and twenty-four in quarto and octavo. This collection had fallen into the hands of a dealer in old books, who knew me, by having been a cuſtomer, and brought it to me. My uncle apparently had left it with him, when he went to America, fifty years ago. I found many notes written on the margin with his own hand. His grandſon Samuel Franklin ſtill lives at Boſton.

Our humble family at an early period embraced the principles of the reformed religion. Our forefathers remained faithfully attached to it during the reign of Mary, and were in danger of being harraſſed on account of their zeal againſt Popery. They were in poſſeſſion of an Engliſh verſion of the Bible: In order to conceal and preſerve it in ſafety, they bethought themſelves of faſtening it with ſtrings, in an open poſition, to the inſide of the cover of a night-ſtool. When my great grandfather was deſirous of reading it to the family, he reverſed the cover upon his knees, and turned over the leaves, without unlooſing the cords which faſtened it. One of the children always remained at the door to give notice if he ſaw the apparitor approaching; this was an officer of the ſpiritual-court. On the leaſt alarm, the cover of the night-ſtool was inſtantly reſtored to its proper place, and the bible remained concealed underneath

it as uſual. This anecdote I had from my uncle Benjamin.

The whole family continued attached to the church of England, till towards the concluſion of the reign of Charles the Second; an æra when ſome of the miniſters who had been diſplaced as non-conformiſts, having eſtabliſhed conventicles in Northamptonſhire, Benjamin and Joſias joined them, never again to ſeparate. The reſt of the family continued in the Epiſcopal church.

Joſias, my father, married early. He carried his wife and three children to New-England, about the year 1682. The conventicles being at that time under the proſcription of the law, and their meetings frequently diſturbed, ſome conſiderable people of his acquaintance reſolved to go to America, in hopes of enjoying the quiet exerciſe of their religion; and he determined to accompany them.

My father had four more children by the ſame wife in America, and ten by a ſecond marriage; in all ſeventeen. I remember to have ſeen thirteen of them at table together, all of whom grew up and married. I was the youngeſt ſon, and the youngeſt of all the children, excepting two daughters.

I was born at Boſton in New-England. My mother, my father's ſecond wife, was Abias Folger, the daughter of Peter Folger, one of the firſt ſettlers in New-England, whom Cotton Mather mentions in his eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of that province, as a *pious and learned Engliſhman*, if I remember his expreſſion properly. I have heard that he compoſed ſeveral little pieces,

pieces, though one only was printed. I ſaw it many years ago; it was written in 1675, in familiar verſe, according to the taſte of the times and the country. It is addreſſed to the then governors, and requeſts liberty of conſcience for the Anabaptiſts, the Quakers, and other ſectaries, who had recently been perſecuted. He attributes the war with the natives, and other calamities which at that time afflicted the country, to this perſecution, conſidering them as ſo many judgments of God, for the puniſhment of this odious crime. He alſo exhorts the government to abrogate laws ſo inimical to charity. This piece appeared to me to be written with a certain degree of maſculine liberty, and agreeable ſimplicity.

My brothers were all bound apprentices to various trades. With reſpect to myſelf, I was put to a grammar-ſchool, in the eighth year of my age. My father deſtined me for the church, and already conſidered me as the chaplain of the family. The facility with which I learned to read in my infancy, (for I do not recollect the time when I could not read,) and the opinion of all his friends, who aſſured him that I would certainly become a man of letters, confirmed him in this deſign. My uncle Benjamin likewiſe approved of it, and promiſed to give me all his volumes of ſermons, written in his own ſhort-hand, as I have already mentioned, provided I would be at the trouble to learn it. I remained, however hardly a twelvemonth at ſchool, although during that ſhort period I had riſen ſucceſſively to the middle of that year's claſs, then to the top of the ſame claſs, thence to the claſs immediately

immediately above, and I ſhould have gone into the next, at the beginning of the enſuing year; but my father, burdened with a numerous family, found himſelf unable, without much inconvenience, to ſupport the expences of my education; beſides, conſidering, as I heard him ſay in my preſence, the ſmall encouragement that ſuch a line of life affords to thoſe educated purpoſely for it, he renounced his original idea, withdrew me from my ſtudies, and ſent me to the ſchool of a Mr. George Brownwell, to learn writing and arithmetic; he was a ſkilful maſter, who commonly ſucceded very well in his profeſſion, by employing only the gentleſt methods towards his pupils. I ſoon learned under his tuition to write a good hand, but in arithmetic I made not the ſmalleſt progreſs.

At ten years of age I was brought home to aſſiſt my father in his buſineſs, which was that of a candle and ſoap-maker, trades, to which he had not indeed ſerved an apprenticeſhip, but which he had embraced on his arrival in New-England, finding that there was not ſufficient employment for a dyer, to enable him to ſupport his family. My employments conſequently were to attend the ſhop, cut the wicks for the candles, run errands, &c.

I diſliked this trade much, and had a great inclination for that of a ſailor, but my father poſitively declared againſt this idea. However, the neighbourhood of the water afforded me frequent occaſions of exerciſing myſelf both on it and in it. I learned early to ſwim and to ſteer a boat, and when I was embarked

barked with other children of my own age, they always gave up to me the management of the helm, eſpecially on dangerous occaſions. Indeed, I was almoſt always the leader of the party, and frequently brought them into miſchief. I ſhall mention to you one example, which evinces an early ſpirit of public enterpriſe, although not indeed in this caſe conſiſtent with juſtice.

The reſervoir of a neighbouring mill was terminated on one ſide by a ſalt pit, on the bank of which we uſed to place ourſelves at full tide, in order to catch ſmall fiſh. As by frequently treading on it, we had rendered it a perfect mire, I propoſed to conſtruct a cauſeway on which we might ſtand dry and firm. I pointed out to my comrades a large quantity of ſtones, collected indeed for the purpoſe of building a new houſe near the ſalt-pit, but admirably calculated for completing our project: On the evening, after the workmen were gone home, I got together a number of my play-fellows, and by labouring diligently like ſo many ants, two or three ſometimes aſſiſting to remove a ſingle ſtone, we carried the whole off, and conſtructed our little key. In the morning, the workmen were aſtoniſhed at not finding their ſtones, which had all travelled to our cauſeway. The authors of this transfer being found out and detected, moſt of us received a correction from our parents; and although I demonſtrated the utility of our labours, my father convinced me that nothing could be truly uſeful which was not ſtrictly honeſt.

Perhaps

Perhaps you may be deſirous to know what ſort of a man my father was? He had an excellent conſtitution, was of a middling ſize, but well made, very ſtrong, and dexterous in performing whatever he attempted. He drew pretty well, and he knew ſomething of muſic; his voice alſo was ſonorous and agreeable; ſo that when he ſung a pſalm-tune, accompanied with his violin, which he ſometimes did in the evening, it was truly pleaſing to hear him; he likewiſe knew ſomething of mechanics, and could occaſionally uſe the tools of ſeveral trades. But his moſt excellent quality was a ſound underſtanding and ſolid judgment, of ſuch matters as came within the juriſdiction of prudence, whether appertaining to public or private life. He was never indeed employed in the former, becauſe the numerous family he had to educate, and the moderateneſs of his fortune, kept him inceſſantly employed in his profeſſion; but I well remember that he was frequently conſulted by our principal men, who came to aſk his opinion relative to the affairs of the town, or of the particular ſect to which he belonged, and they paid great deference to his judgement; individuals alſo often applied to him on their private affairs when involved in difficulties, and he was frequently choſen arbitrator between contending parties.

He was fond to ſee at his table, as often as it was convenient, ſome friends or neighbours of ſuperior underſtanding, whoſe converſation was agreeable; and

and he always took care to introduce ſubjects either uſeful or amuſing, which might tend to inſtruct his children. By theſe means he early formed our minds to what was good, juſt, prudent, and uſeful, in the conduct of life. Never was there any enquiry concerning the diſhes that appeared on the table, nor any diſcuſſion whether they were well or ill cooked, in or out of ſeaſon, taſted agreeably or the contrary, or were preferable or inferior to ſuch and ſuch others of the ſame kind. Thus accuſtomed from my infancy to the utmoſt inattention to theſe matters, I have been all my life wholly indifferent as to what kind of food was ſet before me; and even now I pay ſo little attention to it, that a few hours after my dinner, I ſhould be unable to ſay of what it had conſiſted. In travelling I have more eſpecially found the advantage of this habit, for I have often met with people who, poſſeſſing a nicer taſte than myſelf, becauſe they cultivated it more, ſuffered much on occaſions where for my own part I could perceive nothing wanting.

My mother alſo had a moſt excellent conſtitution. She had ſuckled all her ten children herſelf, and I never remember to have ſeen either her or my father afflicted with any complaint, except that of which they died; my father, at the age of eighty-ſeven, and my mother of eighty-five. They were buried together at Boſton, where, a few years ago, I placed a marble tablet over their grave, with the following inſcription:

"Here

" Here Lie
" JOSIAS FRANKLIN and ABIAS his Wife,
" They lived together with reciprocal affection during fifty-
" nine years; and without any ſettled revenue or lucrative
" employment, by means of aſſiduous labour, and honeſt induſtry,
" maintained a numerous family with decency, and brought up
" thirteen children, and ſeven grand-children.
" Reader, let their example encourage you to fulfil with dili-
" gence the duties of your vocation, and to rely on the aſſiſtance
" of Divine Providence!
" He, was pious, and prudent,
" She, diſcreet, and virtuous.
" Their youngeſt Son fulfils his duty,
" In conſecrating this ſtone to their memory."

I perceive by my rambling digreſſions that I am old. I formerly wrote with more method, but one does not dreſs for private company, as if they were going to a ball. This is perhaps merely negligence.

To return, I continued to follow the profeſſion of my father, during two years, that is to ſay, till I was twelve years of age; at that time, my brother John, who had ſerved an apprenticeſhip to the ſame trade, having left my father, married, and ſet up for himſelf, in Rhode Iſland; I was deſtined, according to all appearances, to ſupply his place, and continue all my life a maker of candles. But my averſion to this buſineſs continued, and made my father afraid, that if he did not offer me ſome more agreeable occupation, I would leave him and go to ſea, as my brother Joſias had done, very much to his diſſatisfaction. For that reaſon he carried me to ſee maſons, joiners, coopers,

coopers, braziers, &c. at work, in order to try if he could fix my inclination on ſome profeſſion that would keep me at home. Ever ſince that time it has afforded me pleaſure to ſee good workmen handle their tools, and I have often experienced the utility of what I had picked up in this manner, by its enabling me to do little jobs for myſelf when there were no workmen at hand, and to conſtruct ſmall machines for my experiments at the moment when the ideas I wiſhed to realize were freſh and ſtrongly imprinted on my mind.

My father at laſt reſolved to make me a cutler; he ſent me a few days on trial, to Samuel, ſon of my uncle Benjamin, who, after learning this trade in London, had lately ſettled in Boſton; but the ſum he exacted as my apprentice fee, not being agreeable to my father, I was again taken home.

From my infancy I was fond of reading, and I laid out in books all the little money I could procure. I was particularly delighted with relations contained in voyages; my firſt acquiſition was Bunyan's Works in ſmall ſeparate volumes. I afterwards ſold this, in order to enable me to purchaſe the Hiſtorical Collection, by R. Button, which conſiſted of about forty or fifty little cheap volumes.

The ſmall library belonging to my father, conſiſted principally of books of practical and polemical divinity; I read the greateſt part of them. I have often regretted, that, at a time, when I had ſo great a thirſt for knowledge, ſome better books did not fall into my hands, as it was decided that I was not to belong

belong to the church. He had alſo the lives of Plutarch, in which I read much; and I ſtill conſider the time ſpent in peruſing them, as well employed. I likewiſe found a work of Daniel de Foe, entitled *an eſſay on projects*, from which I received impreſſions that may perhaps have influenced ſome of the principal events of my life.

My inclination for books at length determined my father to make a printer of me, although one of his ſons was already in that profeſſion. My brother James had returned from England in 1717, with a preſs and types, in order to eſtabliſh a printing-houſe at Boſton. This buſineſs was much more agreeable to me than that of my father, although I had ſtill a predilection for the ſea. To prevent the effects that might reſult from this inclination, my father was impatient to ſee me bound apprentice to my brother. I refuſed a long while; at length I allowed myſelf to be perſuaded, and ſigned my indentures at twelve years of age. It was agreed that I ſhould ſerve as an apprentice till I was one and twenty, and ſhould only receive wages as a workman during the laſt year.

In a ſhort time I made great progreſs in this buſineſs, and became an uſeful aſſiſtant to my brother. I had now an opportunity of procuring better books; the connections that I neceſſarily had with the apprentices of bookſellers, enabled me now and then to borrow ſome volumes from them, which I always returned very punctually and uninjured. How often have I paſſed the greater part of the night reading in

my chamber, when a book had been lent me in the evening, which it was neceſſary to return in the morning, leſt it ſhould be perceived to be miſſing, or ſhould be enquired after!

At length, a merchant of the name of Matthew Adams, a man of ſome abilities, and poſſeſſed of a good collection of books, who uſed to come frequently to our printing-houſe, paid ſome attention to me; he invited me to ſee his library, and had the goodneſs to lend me ſuch books as I wiſhed to read. I was at this time ſeized with a ſtrong inclination for poetry, and compoſed ſeveral trifles in verſe. My brother imagining that he might find his account in it, encouraged me, and engaged me to compoſe two ballads; the one called the *Tragedy of Pharoah*, contained an account of the ſhipwreck of Captain Worthilake and his two daughters; the other was a ſailor's ſong, on the capture of a famous pirate, named Teach, or Black-Beard; they were wretched in point of ſtyle; mere blind-men's ditties. After they were printed, my brother ſent me to hawk them about the town; the firſt had a prodigious run, becauſe it related a recent and much-talked-of event.

Succeſs flattered my vanity, but my father depreſſed my courage, by ridiculing my performances, and telling me, that verſe-makers were always poor. Thus I eſcaped the misfortune of being a poet, probably a very bad one; but as the talent of writing in proſe has been of great utility to me in the courſe of my life, and has principally contributed to my advancement, I ſhall now recount to you, by what means,

in the ſituation I then was, I acquired what ſmall degree of ability I may poſſeſs in that line.

There was another young man in the town, a great lover of books alſo, called John Collins, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We had frequent diſputes with each other; we loved argument, and liked nothing better than to be by the ears together. This contentious turn of mind, by the bye, is apt to become a very bad habit, which often renders a perſon inſupportable in company, becauſe it can only be exerciſed through the medium of contradiction; and, beſides the animoſity and trouble which it occaſions in converſation, it frequently produces diſlike, and even enmities, between thoſe who have the greateſt occaſion to cultivate each others friendſhip. I acquired this turn at firſt, by reading books on polemical divinity, when I lived with my father. I have ſince obſerved, that ſenſible people rarely fall into this error, except thoſe who belong to the law, the wranglers of the univerſity, and men of all profeſſions who have received their education at Edinburgh.

There aroſe one day, I know not how, a diſpute between Collins and me, relative to the education of women; namely, whether it was proper that they ſhould be inſtructed in the ſciences, and if they had talents to profit by ſtudy? He ſupported the negative, and aſſerted that that line was above their powers. He was naturally more eloquent than me; words flowed in abundance from his mouth; and ſometimes in my own opinion, I was vanquiſhed more

more by his volubility, than by his powers of argument. We parted without having agreed on the point in queſtion, and as we were not to meet again for ſome time, I put my reaſons upon paper, made a clean copy, and ſent it to him. He anſwered; and I replied. Three or four letters written by each party had thus paſſed between us, when my father accidentally found my papers and read them. Without entering into any diſcuſſion of the point in diſpute, he took occaſion to ſpeak of my manner of writing. He obſerved, that although I had the advantage of my antagoniſt in orthography, and punctuation, which I derived from the printing-houſe, I was much his inferior in elegance of expreſſion, in method, and in clearneſs. Of this he convinced me by a variety of examples. I felt the juſtice of his remarks; I became more attentive to language; and reſolved to endeavour to improve my ſtyle.

About this time there fell into my hands an odd volume of the Spectator; it was the third; I had never ſeen any of them before; I bought it; I read and re-read it, and was delighted with my purchaſe; I found the ſtyle excellent, and was deſirous if poſſible to imitate it. In order to ſucceed, I ſelected ſome of the papers, made ſhort ſummaries of the ſenſe of each period, and laid them aſide for ſome days; after which I endeavoured, without looking at the original, to recompoſe the eſſay, and to expreſs at length each thought as it was in the book, employing ſuch phraſes as occurred to my mind. I next compared my Spectator with the

original; I recognized ſome of my faults and corrected them; but I found I was in want of a proviſion of words, in order to expreſs myſelf properly, as well as of a facility of recollecting and uſing them, all of which it appeared to me that I might have acquired before this time, had I continued my practice of making verſes. The perpetual want of words of ſimilar ſignification, but of various lengths ſuited to the meaſure, as well as of different ſounds for the rhyme, would have neceſſitated me to have ſearched for ſynonyma, would have fixed them in my head, and made me maſter of them. In conſequence of this idea I took ſeveral of the ſtories of the Spectator, and turned them into verſe. After ſome time, when I had completely forgotten the original, I wrote them anew in proſe.

Sometimes I mingled all my ſummaries together, and after an interval of a few weeks, I endeavoured to arrange them in the beſt order, before I began to form the entire periods or complete the diſcourſe. This was with a view to attain a method in the arrangement of my thoughts. Afterwards, on comparing my work with the original, I diſcovered many faults and corrected them. But I had ſometimes the pleaſure of imagining that in a few particulars of little importance, I had been fortunate enough to correct the method or the language, and this encouraged me to hope, that perhaps I might with much pains attain to write decent Engliſh, which was one of the principal objects of my ambition.

The

The time which I employed in theſe exerciſes, and in reading, was the evening after the labour of the day was over, the morning before it began, or on Sundays when I found means of remaining alone at the printing-houſe, by abſenting myſelf from aſſiſting at divine ſervice. My father inſiſted on my attending regularly at church while I lived in his houſe; in truth I ſtill conſidered it as my duty, although it appeared to me that I had not time to practiſe it.

At the age of ſixteen I read a work by Tryon, in which he recommends a vegetable diet; I reſolved to obſerve it. My brother being a bachelor, did not keep houſe, but boarded himſelf and his apprentices with a neighbour. My refuſal to eat animal food was productive of inconvenience, and I was frequently ſcolded for my ſingularity. I made myſelf maſter of the mode in which Tryon prepared ſeveral of his diſhes, ſuch as ſimply boiling potatoes, or rice, making haſty-pudding, and the like. I then told my brother, that if he would allow me weekly the one half of what he paid for my board, I would maintain myſelf. He conſented immediately, and I ſoon found that even of this half, I could ſave a part. This was a new fund for the purchaſe of books; and was alſo productive of other advantages. When my brother, and the workmen, left the printing-houſe to go to dinner, I remained, and quickly diſpatching my ſlight repaſt, which was often no more than a buiſcuit or a ſlice of bread, with a handful of dried raiſins, or a cake from the paſtry-cooks with a glaſs of water, I had the remainder of the time till their

return for ſtudy, and my progreſs was in proportion to that clearneſs of ideas and promptitude of conception, which are the concomitants of temperance, in eating and drinking.

It was about this time, that being put to the bluſh for my ignorance in arithmetic, which I had twice failed to learn at ſchool, I took up Cocker, and went through the whole of it by myſelf, with the greateſt facility.

I read alſo the navigation of Seller, and Sturmy, and made myſelf maſter of what little geometry they contained, but I never made any great progreſs in that ſcience. I read nearly about the ſame time, Lock's *Eſſay on the Human Underſtanding*, and *the Art of* THINKING of M. M. de Port Royal.

While I was labouring to form and improve my ſtyle, I met with an Engliſh grammar, I think it was Greenwood's, at the end of which, there are two little eſſays on rhetoric and logic; in the laſt I found an example of a Socratic diſputation. Soon afterwards I procured Xenophon's Memorabilia of Socrates, in which ſeveral other examples of this method are given. I embraced it with enthuſiaſm, and inſtantly renounced blunt contradiction, as well as direct and poſitive argument, and confined myſelf to an ſimple mode of aſking queſtions. The reading of Shafteſbury and Collins made me a Pyrrhoniſt, and as I was ſo previouſly, with reſpect to ſeveral religious doctrines, I found that the Socratic mode of reaſoning was more advantageous for myſelf, as well as

more

more embarraſſing to thoſe againſt whom I employed it.

I ſoon took much delight in it, and practiſed it on all occaſions; and I became dextrous in obtaining, even from thoſe who were much my ſuperiors in point of knowledge, conceſſions of whoſe conſequences they themſelves were not aware. I thus embaraſſed them in difficulties, from which they could not extricate themſelves, and often obtained victories neither due to my cauſe, nor to my arguments.

I continued to uſe this mode of diſputation during ſeveral years; however, I gave it up by degrees, only preſerving the habit of expreſſing myſelf in terms of diffidence and modeſty; and when I advanced any doubtful poſition, I was careful never to uſe the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any other that might convey the idea of obſtinate attachment to my own opinion. I would rather ſay, *I conceive*, or *I ſuppoſe ſuch a thing may be ſo*, it *appears to me that I ſhould think ſo or ſo, for ſuch or ſuch reaſons*; or, *I imagine it may be thus or thus, if I am not deceived*. This habit I think has been very uſeful to me, when I have been deſirous of impreſſing my opinions on the minds of other men, or of perſuading them to adopt meaſures, which I have from time to time propoſed to them; and ſince the chief ends of converſation are to *inform*, or *to be informed*; *to pleaſe*, or *to perſuade*; I earneſtly deſire, that enlightened and well-meaning men, may not voluntarily diminiſh the power which they poſſeſs of doing good,

by a poſitive and preſumptuous manner of expreſſing themſelves, which never fails to diſguſt their hearers, to excite oppoſition, and to deſtroy all the purpoſes, for which ſpeech has been beſtowed on man.

In a word, if you are deſirous of inſtructing others, a poſitive and dogmatical manner of advancing your opinion, ſerves only to provoke contradiction, and to prevent you from being liſtened to with attention. If with a wiſh to learn, and to profit from the knowledge of others, you expreſs yourſelf as one ſtrongly attached to your own opinions, modeſt and ſenſible men, who are averſe to conteſt, will probably allow you to remain in peaceable poſſeſſion of your errors. In following ſuch a method, you can rarely hope to pleaſe your auditors, ſo as to conciliate their good will, or to perſuade ſuch as you are deſirous of inducing to concur with you, in your intentions. Pope judiciouſly obſerves, that

"Men muſt be taught as if you taught them not,
"And things unknown propos'd as things forgot."

He alſo adviſes

"To ſpeak, tho' ſure, with ſeeming diffidence,"

He might here have added a line, which he has inſerted in another place, in my opinion, with leſs propriety.

"For want of modeſty is want of ſenſe."

If you aſk, why I ſay with leſs propriety? I will mention the two lines together:

"Immodeſt words admit of no defence,
"For want of modeſty is want of ſenſe."

But

But is not the want of ſenſe, when a man has the misfortune to be in that predicament, a ſort of apology for the want of modeſty? And would not theſe lines be more conſonant to truth were they written thus:

Immodeſt words, admit *but this defence*
That want of modeſty is want of ſenſe.

This, however, I refer to thoſe who are better judges of theſe matters than I can pretend to be.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Young Franklin is eager to acquire Literary Reputation—He ſends ſome anonymous Eſſays to his Brother's News-paper—The Origin of his Averſion to Arbitrary Power—He becomes diſcontented with his Situation—Leaves Boſton—Embarks for New-York at the age of Seventeen—Arrives there, and ſets out ſoon after for Philadelphia—Saves the life of a Dutchman—A Diſſertation concerning the Pilgrim's Progreſs, written by the celebrated John Bunyan—Our Author cures himſelf of a Fever by drinking cold Water—Some Account of Dr. Brown—Arrival in PHILADELPHIA.

MY brother reſolved in 1720 or 1721, to ſet up a news-paper; it was the ſecond that had been printed in America, and was entitled, "The New England Courant;" the only one that ever appeared before, was the "Boſton News-Letters." I recollect very well, that ſome of his friends wiſhed to diſſuade him from this enterprize, repreſenting it as a ſcheme that in all human probability would prove unſucceſsful, becauſe, according to them, a ſingle news-paper was ſufficient for all America. Notwithſtanding this, there are now (in 1771) no leſs than twenty-five.

He however carried his project into execution, and I was employed in diſtributing the papers among his cuſtomers, after having aſſiſted in printing and working them off.

There were a few ingenious men of my brother's acquaintance, who amuſed themſelves by writing little eſſays

eſſays for his paper, and this circumſtance not only added to the credit, but augmented the ſale of it. Theſe gentlemen often called upon us; I liſtened to their converſation with great eagerneſs, and heard them exult at the good reception which their writings received from the public. I was tempted to aſpire to the ſame kind of reputation; but as I was ſtill a boy, I naturally enough concluded that my brother would not inſert any thing of which he knew me to be the author. I reſolved therefore to diſguiſe my hand-writing, and having drawn up an anonymous ſpeculation, I put it that very night under the printing-houſe door. It was found next morning, and immediately communicated to the little literary club; they read it in my own hearing, and I enjoyed the exquiſite ſatisfaction of knowing that it had obtained their approbation, and, that among their various conjectures concerning the author, they did not indicate a ſingle perſon who did not enjoy a great reputation for genius and abilities in the province. At preſent I am inclined to ſuppoſe that I was extremely lucky in my judges, and that they were not ſo excellent as I believed them to be. Encouraged, however, by their applauſe, I wrote and ſent to the preſs in the ſame manner, ſeveral other papers of my compoſition, all of which were alſo approved of, and I preſerved my ſecret until my little ſtock of ideas was completely exhauſted.

My brother from that moment began to have a little more reſpect for me; but he ſtill looked upon himſelf as my maſter, continued to treat me as an apprentice,

prentice, and inſiſted on receiving the ſame ſervices from me as if I had been an utter ſtranger. I, on the other hand, imagined that he required too much from me in many caſes, and thought myſelf intitled to more indulgence on the part of a brother. Our diſputes were often referred to my father, and I am inclined to think that the other was either for the moſt part in the wrong, or that I was the better advocate of the two; for judgment was commonly declared in my favour: But my brother, who was choleric, ſtill continued to ſtrike me, a circumſtance which I took in great dudgeon.

I have been often ſince induced to think, that this harſh and tyrannical treatment, contributed not a little to imprint in my mind, that averſion for arbitrary power which I have retained during the remainder of my life.

In a ſhort time my apprenticeſhip became ſo inſupportable, that I ſighed after an opportunity to ſhorten it; at laſt one preſented itſelf in a very unexpected manner. A paragraph inſerted in our paper, concerning ſome political ſubject which I do not at preſent recollect, happened to give great offence to the aſſembly. My brother was arreſted, reprimanded, and impriſoned, by the ſpeaker, becauſe, as I imagine, he would not give up the author. I myſelf was alſo taken into cuſtody, and examined before the council; but although I did not give any ſatisfaction to its members, on the ſubject concerning which I was queſtioned, they contented themſelves with admoniſhing

me,

me, conſidering me perhaps as obliged, in quality of an apprentice, to preſerve my maſter's ſecrets inviolable.

Notwithſtanding our private quarrels, my brother's impriſonment inſpired me with much reſentment. While it continued I was intruſted with the direction of the paper, and I had the courage to inſert ſome bold obſervations upon the conduct of his proſecutors. This circumſtance gave great ſatisfaction to him, but his adverſaries began to look upon me in an unfavourable point of view, and to conſider me as a dangerous young man, much given to libels.

The enlargement of my brother was accompanied by a very ſtrange order from the aſſembly, directing, that "James Franklin ſhould no longer print the news-paper, entitled, The New England Courant."

On this he aſſembled all his friends in our printing-houſe, in order to conſult what was proper to be done in this conjuncture. Some propoſed to elude the ſentence by altering the title of the news-paper; but my brother perceiving great inconvenience in this ſcheme, it was at length agreed, that it would be infinitely better to print it henceforth under the name of Benjamin Franklin; and in order to evade the vengeance of the aſſembly, which might overwhelm him, under pretence of ſtill printing this news-paper, through the intervention of his apprentice, it was decided that my indentures ſhould be given up, with a complete and final diſcharge at the back of it, ſo that it might be produced by me in caſe of neceſſity; but, that in order to inſure to my brother the benefit ariſing from my ſervices, I ſhould ſign a new contract for the unexpired part of

the term, which ſhould be kept ſecret. This was a very frail arrangement. It was, however, inſtantly put in execution, and the paper, in conſequence of it, was printed for ſeveral months under my name.

At length, another quarrel having taken place between my brother and me, I was determined to make uſe of my newly-acquired liberty, preſuming that he would not dare to produce the engagement into which I had recently entered. It was not honeſt, however, on my part, to make uſe of this advantage, and I, in conſequence, look upon this action as one of the firſt errors that I committed; but the irregularaity of it made but little impreſſion on my mind, embittered as it was by reſentment, on account of the blows which my brother's anger had often induced him to make me experience, although in other reſpects his diſpoſition was not naturally bad; perhaps my anſwers were ſuch as to give him ſufficient provocation.

When he perceived that I was reſolved to leave him, he endeavoured to prevent me from working any where elſe; he accordingly went to all the printing-houſes in the town, and prepoſſeſſed the maſter-printers againſt me, who conſequently refuſed to give me any employment.

I then determined to repair to New-York, which was the neareſt town where there was a preſs. After long conſideration, I was confirmed in my deſign of leaving Boſton, where I had already rendered myſelf odious to government. It appeared to me to be very likely, after the arbitrary proceedings of the aſſembly againſt my brother, that any longer ſtay there might

expoſe me to embarraſſments, and I had ſtill greater reaſon to fear this, as my indiſcreet diſputes concerning religion, made me begin already to be looked upon with horror by the *faithful*, who conſidered me as an Apoſtate, or an Atheiſt.

I accordingly came to a determination; but my father being for this once on my brother's ſide, I preſumed that if I departed openly, they would take the proper means to prevent me.

My friend Collins undertook to aſſiſt me in my flight. He made a bargain for my paſſage with the captain of a ſloop, belonging to New-York, to whom he told that I was a young man of his acquaintance who had an intrigue with a woman of bad character, whoſe relations wiſhed to force him to marry her, and that in conſquence, I neither dared to appear, nor to depart publicly.

I ſold part of my books in order to procure a ſmall ſum of money, and I then repaired ſecretly on board the ſloop. By means of a good wind I found myſelf in three days at New-York, 300 miles diſtant from the place of my nativity, at the age of ſeventeen, without the leaſt recommendation, without even knowing a ſingle perſon in that town, and with a very ſcanty ſupply of money in my pocket.

The attachment I had once formed to the life of a ſailor was entirely evaporated, elſe I might now have ſatisfied my propenſity in favour of that occupation; but having another trade, and thinking myſelf a good workman, I did not heſitate to offer my ſervices to the only printer in this town, old Mr. William Bradford,

ford, who had been ſettled in Pennſylvania, but had quitted that province, on account of a quarrel with Governor Keith. He could not give me any employment, having but little to do, and being already provided with a ſufficient number of men; but he told me that his ſon, who was a printer in Philadelphia, had ſome time ſince loſt his principal workman, Aquila Roſe, and that if I went there, he believed I might be employed by him.

Philadelphia is one hundred miles from New-York, but I did not heſitate to embark on board a ſmall veſſel, in order to repair by the ſhorteſt cut to Amboy, leaving my trunk and effects behind, which were to come to me by a circuitous voyage. In croſſing the Bay we experienced a gale of wind that tore all our ſails, which, by the bye, were very rotten, prevented us from entering the Schuylkill, and obliged us to bear away for Long-Iſland.

During the ſtorm, a drunken Dutchman, who was a paſſenger as well as myſelf, fell over-board. At the moment he plunged into the ſea, I ſeized hold of him by the hair of his head, and drew him towards the veſſel, ſo that with a little help I contrived to get him once more on board. This immerſion ſeemed to make him a little more ſober, and he ſoon after fell aſleep, having firſt pulled a book out of his pocket, which he begged me to dry for him; this happened to be a tranſlation of my old favourite Bunyan into low Dutch; it was an excellent impreſſion, on ſuper-fine paper, with copper-plate prints; a more favourable appearance than I had ever ſeen it aſſume in the original.

original. I have ſince learned, that it has been tranſlated into moſt of the European languages, and I am perſuaded, that, after the Bible, it is one of the books which has been moſt in circulation.

Honeſt John is the firſt I know of, who has mingled narrative and dialogue together; a mode of writing very engaging to the reader, who in the moſt intereſting paſſages, finds himſelf admitted, as it were, into the company, and preſent at the converſation. Defoe has imitated him with ſucceſs in his Robinſon Cruſoe, his Moll Flanders, and ſeveral other works, and Richardſon has done the ſame in his Pamela, &c.

On approaching Long-Iſland we found ourſelves unable to land, on account of the ſurf on that part of the coaſt, which proved to be very rocky. We therefore caſt anchor and veered out our cable, ſo as to bring us as near as poſſible to the ſhore; ſome of the inhabitants came down towards the ſea-ſide, and hailed us, as we did them; but the wind was ſo ſtrong and the waves ſo boiſterous, that we could not underſtand one another. We perceived ſeveral ſmall boats, and we made ſigns, and deſired them to come with one of theſe and take us from on board, but they either did not comprehend us, or our requeſt appeared impracticable to them, for they ſoon after retired.

Night now approached, and nothing elſe was left for us but to have patience until the wind abated; in expectation of this event, the pilot and I determined, if poſſible, to get a little ſleep. In order to accompliſh this, we retired between the hatches, and rejoined the

Dutchman, who was ſtill wet. The waves, however, which now and then broke over the veſſel, ran through the ſeams of the little quarter deck in ſuch a manner, that we were ſoon nearly as much drenched as himſelf.

We had but little repoſe during the night, but the wind having become a little leſs violent next morning, we ſucceeded in reaching Amboy before the evening, after having been thirty hours deſtitute of proviſions and deprived of any other nouriſhment than a bottle of bad rum, the water on which we ſailed being ſalt.

I retired to bed early, with a very violent fever. I had ſomewhere read, that cold water drunk in abundance, was an excellent remedy on this occaſion: I accordingly followed the preſcription, and having ſweated copiouſly during the greateſt part of the night, the fever left me.

Next morning I paſſed the ferry, and continued my journey on foot. I had fifty miles to travel before I reached Burlington, where I had been told I ſhould find a boat that would carry me to Philadelphia. It rained hard during the whole day, and I was wet to the ſkin. Finding myſelf extremely fatigued about noon, I ſtopped at a miſerable public-houſe, where I paſſed the reſt of the day, and the enſuing night. I now almoſt began to regret that I had ever left home, for my appearance was ſuch, that I was ſuſpected of being a runaway ſervant; this I perceived by the queſtions put to me, and I began to think that I ran ſome riſk of being arreſted as ſuch. I however continued my journey next morning, without interruption,

tion, arrived on the ſame evening within eight or ten miles of Burlington, and took up my quarters at an inn kept by a perſon who paſſed by the name of Dr. Brown.

This man entered into converſation with me, during ſupper, and finding that I had read a little, he teſtified the livelieſt friendſhip for, and intereſt in my behalf: our acquaintance continued during the remainder of his life. I imagine that he had been what is commonly termed a Quack Doctor, for there was not a ſingle city in England, or indeed in any country in Europe, of which he could not give ſome deſcription. He poſſeſſed a certain degree of learning and genius, but he was an Infidel; and a few years after, he wickedly attempted to turn the Bible into burleſque metre, as Cotton had formerly *traveſtied* Virgil. By theſe means he repreſented a number of facts under a ridiculous point of view; this circumſtance might have given great offence to weak minds, if his work had been publiſhed, but it never made its appearance. I ſpent that evening at his houſe, and reached Burlington next morning.

I had the mortification to learn, that the uſual paſſage boats had ſet off ſome time before my arrival. This was on a Saturday, and there would not be a ſimilar opportunity before the following Tueſday. I inſtantly returned towards an old woman's houſe, who had ſold me ſome gingerbread, which I intended to have ate upon the water, and of her demanded what was to be done? She invited me to lodge with her, until ſome new occaſion ſhould

preſent itſelf, of embarking on board a veſſel bound for Philadelphia; being greatly fatigued with travelling ſo far on foot, I accepted her kind offer. When ſhe heard that I was a printer, ſhe endeavoured to prevail upon me to remain at Burlington, in order to follow my trade there. She was ignorant of the ſums to be advanced, and the capital neceſſary for carrying it on! I found true hoſpitality under her roof. She gave me, with a very good grace, a dinner compoſed of ox-cheek, and would accept nothing in return, but a pint of ale.

I thought myſelf fixed here until next Tueſday, but happening to walk that very evening on the banks of the river, I perceived a boat bound to Philadelphia, in which there was a great number of paſſengers. They received me inſtantly on board, and as there was little or no wind, we made uſe of our oars. Not being able to deſcry the city, towards midnight ſeveral of our company aſſured us that we had paſſed it, and would row no longer; the others not being poſitive as to our ſituation, it was decided that we ſhould proceed no farther; we accordingly made towards the ſhore, entered a creek, and landed near an old paliſade, the wood of which ſerved us to make a fire, as the night (it being in the month of October) was exceedingly cold.

We remained here until day light; a perſon in company then recollected that the place where we had ſpent the night, was called Sooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we ſoon after diſcovered,

covered. We arrived there on Sunday, about eight or nine o'clock in the morning, and landed at the Quay in Market-Street.

I have thus entered into all the minute details of the voyage, and I ſhall deſcribe, in the ſame manner, whatever occurred to me, on my firſt arrival in that city, ſo that you may be enabled to compare ſuch very unlikely beginnings with the figure I afterwards made there.

CHAP. III.

Franklin arrives at Philadelphia, deſtitute both of Money and Friends—He purchaſes ſome Bread, which he eats in the Street—in this Situation he has a glimpſe of his future Wife—He is employed in a Printing-Houſe—Some Account of Keimer his Maſter—He becomes acquainted with the Governor of Pennſylvania—Goes back to Boſton—Returns to Philadelphia—Is accompanied by Collins—Their Quarrel and Separation.

WHEN I arrived at Philadelphia, I was in my working dreſs, my beſt clothes being in my trunk, which was to come round from New-York, by ſea. I was beſides very dirty, in conſequence of being ſo long in the boat; my pockets too were crammed with ſhirts and ſtockings, and I am ſure that I muſt have made a very ſtrange figure.

To add to my mortification, I did not know a ſingle perſon in the town, and was even ignorant where I could find a lodging. I was extremely fatigued on account of having rowed during the whole night; I was alſo very hungry, and all the money I had in the world, conſiſted of a ſingle dollar, and about a ſhilling in half-pence, which I gave to the boatmen. They refuſed it at firſt, becauſe I had helped them; but I inſiſted on their accepting it. A man is ſometimes more generous when he has but little money, than when he has a great deal: The reaſon

reaſon of this perhaps is, that on ſuch an occaſion he is deſirous of concealing his poverty.

I proceeded towards the end of the ſtreet, examining both ſides of it at the ſame time, with the utmoſt attention, until I arrived at Market-Street, where I met a boy carrying ſome bread in his hand. I had often made an entire meal of dry bread. I aſked him where he had purchaſed it, and went ſtraight to the baker's, which he pointed out with his finger. I inſtantly called for two or three biſcuits, thinking to find ſome of the ſame ſpecies we had at Boſton; but I was informed that none of that kind was to be found at Philadelphia. I then aſked for a three-penny loaf, but I was told that they had not any at that price. Being entirely ignorant of the different prices and kinds of bread made in this part of the country, I deſired them to give me three-pence worth of bread, of whatever ſort they pleaſed. On this I got three large loaves; I was ſurpriſed at receiving ſo many, but took them nevertheleſs, and having no empty room in my pockets, I continued my walk, with a loaf under each arm; as to the other, I held it in my hand while I ate it. In this manner I paſſed along Market-Street, arrived at Fourth-Street, and paraded before the houſe of Mr. Read, the father of the young woman who was afterwards my wife. She happened at that very moment to be at the door, and had good reaſon to think that I made a very fantaſtical appearance.

After this I turned the corner into Cheſnut-Street, eating my bread all the way, and having thus made

a circuit, I found myſelf once more upon the Quay in Market-Street, within a few yards of the boat in which I had arrived. I deſcended a few ſteps in order to drink ſome of the water of the river, and finding myſelf entirely ſatisfied with my firſt loaf, I beſtowed the other two on a woman, who, with her ſon, had been my companions on our excurſion by water.

Being now refreſhed, I again wandered along the ſtreet. It was then filled with a number of perſons, all of whom were very neatly dreſſed, and walked after one another, in a decent and orderly manner, always keeping the ſame ſide of the way. I immediately joined and accompanied them to the Quaker's meeting-houſe, near the Market. I ſat down as the others did, and after having ſpent ſome time in looking around me, without hearing a ſingle word uttered, being exceedingly fatigued with my labour, and want of reſt during the preceeding night, I fell into a profound ſleep. I remained in this ſituation until the aſſembly ſeparated, when one of the aſſiſtants had the complaiſance to awaken me. This conſequently was the firſt houſe which I entered, or in which I ſlept, after my arrival in Philadelphia.

I now once more regained the ſtreet, and continued to walk along the ſide of the river; during my progreſs I attentively examined the faces of all the paſſengers whom I met, and at length fixed upon a young Quaker, whoſe phyſiognomy pleaſed me: I accordingly accoſted and beſought him to inform me where a ſtranger might be able to find a lodging?

We

We were then exactly oppoſite the ſign of the *Three Sailors*. "They receive ſtrangers there," ſays he, pointing out the place at the ſame time with his finger, "but the houſe is not of good repute; if thou "wilt accompany me, I will ſhow thee a better one." He accordingly conducted me to the *Crooked Billet* in Water-Street.

There I ordered a dinner, and while I was eating it, the people of the houſe put ſeveral queſtions to me. My youth and appearance led them to ſuppoſe that I was a fugitive. After dinner my inclination to ſleep returned again; a bed was accordingly prepared for me; I caſt myſelf upon it, without undreſſing, and ſlept till ſix o'clock at night, when they awakened and called me to ſupper. After that I returned to bed at a very early hour, and ſlept without interruption, until the next morning.

As ſoon as I aroſe I dreſſed myſelf as well as poſſible, and repaired to the houſe of Andrew Bradford, the printer. I found his father, whom I had ſeen at New-York, in the ſhop, and who by making the journey on horſe back, had arrived before me at Philadelphia. He preſented me to his ſon, who received me in a very kind manner, and invited me to breakfaſt; but he informed me, that he had no occaſion for a workman at that time, being provided with one a little before. He added that there was another printer of the name of Keimer in the town, who had juſt entered into buſineſs, and who might perhaps employ me; and in caſe of his refuſing to do ſo, he himſelf would moſt willingly give me a lodging, and

a little work from time to time, until ſomething better might occur.

The old man offered of his own accord to conduct me to the new printer's, and when we had arrived there, "Neighbour," ſays he to him, "I have "brought you a young man of your profeſſion; per-"haps you may ſtand in need of his ſervices." Keimer put a few queſtions to me, placed a *compoſing ſtick* in my hand, in order to ſee in what manner I worked, and then ſaid that he would give me employment in a ſhort time, but that at preſent he had no occaſion for me.

Looking upon old Bradford to be a perſon who wiſhed him well, and was deſirous to ſerve him, he began to converſe with him about his preſent enterpriſe, and his future proſpects. Bradford was careful not to diſcover himſelf to be the father of the other printer, and as ſoon as Keimer told him, that he hoped in a ſhort time to have the greateſt part of the buſineſs of the town in his own hands, he by means of ſeveral cunning interrogations and artificial doubts, led him to diſcloſe the foundation of his hopes, and the manner in which he intended to proceed. I was preſent at, and heard the whole of this converſation, and I was not long in diſcovering that one of them was an old fox, and the other a ſilly novice. Bradford ſoon after departed and left me with Keimer, who was exceedingly ſurpriſed when I informed him what and who the old man was.

I found that Keimer's printing utenſils conſiſted of an old damaged preſs, and a ſecond-hand fount of

 Engliſh

Engliſh types, pretty much uſed, and which he himſelf employed at that very time in compoſing an elegy on Aquila Roſe, whom I have mentioned before.

This young man, who, to great abilities, united a moſt excellent character, had been much beloved and eſteemed in the town: He was ſecretary to the aſſembly, and had a very fine turn for poetry. Keimer alſo made verſes, but they did not riſe above mediocrity. He could not, indeed, be ſaid with propriety, to *write* verſes; for it was cuſtomary with him to compoſe them with his types, juſt as they ſtruck his imagination, and as he worked without any copy, had no more than one pair of caſes, and the elegy was likely to occupy all his *letter*, it was impoſſible for any one to aſſiſt him. I undertook to put his preſs, of which he had not as yet made any uſe, and concerning which he was entirely ignorant, into proper order, and having promiſed to come back and work off his elegy, as ſoon as it ſhould be ready, I returned to Mr. Bradford's, who gave me ſome trifle to employ myſelf upon for the moment, and alſo my bed and board.

A few days after this, Keimer ſent for me, in order to work off his elegy. He had by that time procured another pair of caſes, and a pamphlet to reprint, upon which he inſtantly employed me.

Both the printers of Philadelphia appeared to me to be totally deſtitute of the qualities neceſſary to inſure ſucceſs in their profeſſion. Bradford had never been brought up to the buſineſs, and was exceedingly illiterate. Keimer was a little better educated, but he

he was no more than a ſimple compoſitor, and underſtood nothing at all of preſs-work. He had been one of the *French Prophets*, and he knew how to imitate their ſupernatural agitations. At this period of our acquaintance, he profeſſed no particular religion whatever, but a little of all at times; he was very ignorant of the world, and had a great deal of guile in his heart, as I had occaſion afterwards to diſcover.

Keimer was very unhappy that I lodged at Bradford's, while I worked for him. He was indeed in poſſeſſion of a whole houſe, but it was entirely deſtitute of moveables, ſo that it was impoſſible for him to accommodate me there. He procured me a lodging, however, at Mr. Read's, whom I mentioned before, and who was the landlord of his houſe.

My trunk and effects, having arrived at this time, I dreſſed myſelf ſo as to appear before Miſs Read, in a better plight than when chance firſt diſcovered me to her, eating a loaf, and wandering along the ſtreets.

I now began to form an acquaintance among ſuch of the young men in the town as were fond of reading, and I ſpent many very agreeable nights in their company; I was at the ſame time enabled to gain a good deal of money by my induſtry, and to live very well and very contented, thanks to my frugality. Thus I endeavoured to forget Boſton as much as poſſible, and did not wiſh that the place of my nativity ſhould be known to any perſon except my friend Collins, with whom I kept up a conſtant correſpondence, and who faithfully preſerved my ſecret.

A cir-

A circumſtance, however, occurred ſoon after that made me return home much ſooner than I had at firſt propoſed. I had a brother-in-law of the name of Robert Holmes who was maſter of a ſloop, employed as a coaſter between Boſton and the Delaware. Finding himſelf at Newcaſtle, forty miles below Philadelphia, he there happened to hear of me, and wrote me a letter, in which he informed me of the ſorrow, which my precipitate departure from Boſton had occaſioned to my parents, and of the great affection they ſtill entertained towards me, aſſuring me at the ſame time, that every thing would be accommodated to my entire ſatisfaction provided I returned, a proceeding which he moſt earneſtly exhorted me to. In my reply to his letter, I thanked him for his good advice, but I at the ſame time ſpecified the reaſons which had induced me to leave Boſton, with ſo much force and preciſion, that he was convinced I was not ſo much in the wrong as he had at firſt imagined.

Sir William Keith, governor of the Province, was at this very time at Newcaſtle. Captain Holmes happening accidentally to be in his company, when he received my letter, took advantage of that opportunity to ſpeak warmly in my favour, and even to ſhow it to him. The governor read it, and appeared aſtoniſhed, when he learned my extreme youth. He obſerved that I was a young man, of whom great expectations might be juſtly formed; that I ought to be encouraged; that the printers in Philadelphia were all very ignorant in reſpect to their buſineſs;

buſineſs; that if I were eſtabliſhed there, there could be no manner of doubt of my ſucceſs, and that for his part he would employ me to print for the government, and would do me every other ſervice in his power. My brother-in-law afterwards recounted all theſe particulars to me at Boſton, but I was entirely ignorant of them at the time.

One day as Keimer and I happened to be at work together near the window, we perceived the governor and another gentleman, who proved to be Colonel French of Newcaſtle, both very elegantly dreſſed. They came ſtraight towards our houſe, and in a few ſeconds we heard them both at the door. Keimer thinking the viſit intended for him, immediately went down ſtairs to receive them, but the governor, after aſking for me, aſcended to the apartment where I was ſtationed, and with a politeneſs and condeſcenſion to which I had been hitherto unaccuſtomed, paid me many compliments, deſired to be better acquainted with me, reproached me for not making myſelf known to him on my arrival, and inſiſted on my accompanying him to a tavern in order to drink a glaſs of Madeira with him and the Colonel.

I muſt acknowledge that I was not a little ſurpriſed at the honour now done me; and as for Keimer, he appeared in a ſtate of ſtupefaction.

I, however, accompanied the governor and his friend, to a tavern at the corner of Third ſtreet, where he propoſed over a glaſs of wine, that I ſhould eſtabliſh a printing houſe. He inſiſted on the probability

bability of my ſucceſs, and both he and Colonel French aſſured me, that I might depend upon their influence and protection, and that they would unite their efforts, in order to procure me all the public buſineſs of this and the adjacent province. When I expreſſed my doubts of my father's aſſiſting me in this enterprize, Sir William told me, that he would give me a letter to him, and that he had no manner of doubt but that he would comply with his requeſt. It was accordingly determined that I ſhould return to Boſton by the firſt veſſel that ſailed for that port, with a letter of recommendation from the governor to my father. In the mean time, it was agreed, that this project ſhould remain ſecret, and that I ſhould continue to work for Keimer as uſual.

The governor invited me to dine with him, from time to time; I looked upon this as a very great honour, and I was ſo much the more ſenſible of it, as he converſed with me in the moſt affable, familiar, and amicable manner that could be imagined.

Towards the concluſion of the month of April, 1724, a ſmall veſſel preſented itſelf for Boſton; on this I took leave of Keimer, as if my intentions had been merely to return in order to ſee my parents. The governor preſented me with a long letter, in which he communicated the moſt flattering accounts of me to my father, and ſtrongly recommended the project of eſtabliſhing me at Philadelphia, a plan which, according to his opinion, could not fail to make my fortune,

In deſcending the river our veſſel ſtruck upon a ſand bank, and ſprung a leak; the weather was alſo ſtormy, and the ſea tempeſtuous: in ſhort we were obliged to make uſe of the pump without intermiſſion, I myſelf working at it in my turn. We arrived, however, ſafe and ſound at Boſton, at the end of fifteen days.

I had been abſent ſeven whole months, and during all that time, my parents had heard nothing of me, for my brother in law Holmes was not as yet returned, and had not written any thing to my friends concerning me. My unexpected appearance aſtoniſhed the whole family. All, however, except my brother, were charmed at my return, and came to bid me welcome. I went to ſee him at his Printing-office; I was much better dreſſed than I had ever been during the time I was in his ſervice: I had on a complete new ſuit of clothes, a watch and upwards of five guineas of ready money in my pocket. He did not receive me very kindly, for after examining me from head to foot, he applied himſelf again to his work.

The workmen aſked me with great eagerneſs, where I had been? what ſort of a country it was? and how I liked it? I boaſted much of Philadelphia, and the happy life that I led there, expreſſing at the ſame time my earneſt intention of returning. One of them having enquired what kind of money was common there, I inſtantly drew forth a whole handful of ſilver, and ſpread it before them; this circumſtance wonderfully gratified their curioſity, paper money alone being

being in circulation at Boſton. I did not fail after this to produce my watch, but, at length, perceiving my brother to be in a bad humour, I gave them a dollar to drink my health and took my leave. This viſit on my part, piqued him exceedingly; for, when my mother, a ſhort time afterwards, ſpoke of a reconciliation, and of the deſire ſhe had to ſee us live together for the future, as brothers, he informed her, that I had inſulted him in ſuch a groſs manner before his workmen, that he would not either forget or forgive it, during the whole courſe of his life; but in this he deceived himſelf greatly.

The governor's letter, appeared to occaſion ſome ſurpriſe to my father; he, however, ſpoke to me, but little on that ſubject. At the end of a few days, Captain Holmes being returned, he ſhewed it to him, aſked if he knew Sir William Keith? and enquired what ſort of a man he was? adding, that, in his opinion, he had but very little diſcernment to think of an eſtabliſhment for a boy, who ſtill wanted three years of being arrived at that age, when he could be properly termed a man.

Holmes ſaid every thing in his power, in favour of the project, but my father inſiſted in the moſt deciſive manner on the incongruity of the plan, and at length poſitively refuſed to countenance it.

After this, he wrote a civil letter to Sir William, in which he returned him many thanks for the patronage and protection he had ſo obligingly offered to his ſon, but refuſed to aſſiſt me, at leaſt for the preſent, in the plan that had

been pointed out, becauſe, according to his opinion, I was yet too young to be entruſted with the management of ſuch an important enterpriſe, more eſpecially as the neceſſary preparations would require a conſiderable capital.

My old friend Collins, who was a clerk in the Poſt Office, charmed with the accounts which I had given him of Philadelphia, conceived a prodigious inclination to go and reſide there alſo; and while I was waiting for my father's determination, he ſet off before me by land for Rhode Iſland, ordering his books, which formed an excellent collection of tracts on Natural Philoſophy and the Mathematics, to be carried along with my baggage to New York, where he propoſed to wait for me.

Although my father did not reliſh the propoſition made to him by Sir William, he was yet exceedingly pleaſed that I had obtained the patronage and recommendation of a perſon of his rank, and that my induſtry and œconomy had enabled me to equip myſelf in ſuch a reſpectable manner, in ſo ſhort a time.

Seeing no probability of an agreement between my brother and myſelf, after conſenting to my return to Philadelphia, he adviſed me to endeavour to acquire the regard of all the world, to treat every body with reſpect, and above all things to avoid ſatire and ſarcaſm, to which he thought that I had but too great an inclination, adding, that with prudence, œconomy, and perſeverance, I might be able to ſave a ſufficient quantity of money, before I was twenty-one years of age, to eſtabliſh myſelf in buſi-

neſs;

neſs; and that if I then ſhould be in want of a ſmall ſum, he would readily undertake to ſupply me. This was all I was able to obtain, except a few trifling preſents which he and my mother gave me, in token of their affection.

I now embarked once more for New-York, authoriſed, at length, with their approbation and benediction. The ſloop which I was on board, having touched at Newport, Rhode-Iſland, I paid a viſit to my brother John, who had been married and ſettled there for ſome years.

He had always loved, and now received me with great affection. One of his friends, of the name of Vernon, happening to have a debt of about thirty-ſix pounds ſterling due to him in Pennſylvania, requeſted me to get payment of it and to keep the money till he ſhould inform me how to employ it; he accordingly gave me an order for that purpoſe. This affair occaſioned me much uneaſineſs in the ſequel.

At Newport we took on board a number of paſſengers, among whom were two young women, who were acquainted with each other, and a female Quaker, who was very grave, and very ſenſible. I evinced an inclination to do her every ſervice in my power; I ſuppoſe ſhe was conſcious of my good intentions, and in conſequence took an intereſt in every thing that concerned me. In fine, when ſhe perceived that a familiarity had taken place, and ſeemed to increaſe daily, between the two other female paſſengers and me, which they endeavoured by all manner

of means to encourage, ſhe took me apart, and one afternoon ſpoke to me as follows:

"Young man, I am quite unhappy about thee; "thou haſt no relations to watch over thy conduct, "and thou doſt not ſeem to be much acquainted "with the world, and with thoſe ſnares to which thy "youth and inexperience render thee liable! Thou "mayeſt depend on what I am about to tell thee: "Theſe young women lead a diſorderly life; I per- "ceive it in all their actions. If thou art not upon "thy guard, they will draw thee into ſome ſcrape. "They are ſtrangers to thee. I adviſe thee, therefore, "by the friendly intereſt, which I take in thy pre- "ſervation, not to form any acquaintance with "them."

As I did not at firſt appear to think ſo badly of them, as ſhe did, ſhe recounted a number of circumſtances to me, which ſhe had either ſeen or heard, and which, although they had eſcaped my attention, convinced me that ſhe was entirely in the right. I accordingly thanked her for her obliging advice, and promiſed to follow her counſels.

When we arrived at New-York, they told me where they reſided, and requeſted me to go and ſee them. I did not, however, accept of their invitation, and in this I was perfectly right; for, on the next day, the captain perceiving that he had loſt a ſilver ſpoon, and ſome other trifles, which were ſcattered about in the cabin, and knowing that theſe two women were proſtitutes, he obtained a ſearch warrant, went to their apartments, and having there diſcovered the

ſtolen

ſtolen goods, he delivered them over to the civil power, in order to be puniſhed according to law. Thus after having eſcaped a ſunken rock, on which the ſloop ſtruck in her paſſage, I alſo eſcaped in my own perſon from an infinitely more perilous ſhoal!

I found my old friend Collins at New-York; he had arrived there ſome time before me; we had been intimate ever ſince our infancy; we had read the ſame books, and purſued the ſame ſtudies together; but he had the advantage of being able to give up more of his time to thoſe purſuits, and to a paſſion for the mathematics, in which ſcience he left me far behind him.

When I reſided at Boſton, I was accuſtomed to ſpend moſt of my leiſure hours in company with him. He was at that time a ſober and induſtrious young man. His knowledge had conciliated general eſteem, both among the clergy and laity, and he ſeemed to promiſe to make a great figure in ſociety. But, during my abſence, he had unfortunately encouraged a paſſion for ſtrong liquors, brandy in particular, and I learned not only from the report of others, but from his own confeſſion, that he had got drunk every day ſince his arrival at New-York, and had conducted himſelf in a very extravagant and diſorderly manner. He had alſo become fond of play, and loſt all his money, ſo that I was obliged to pay his bill for him at the inn in which he had reſided, and even to defray all his expences during the journey; this was a very great hardſhip upon me.

Mr. Burnet, who was at that time Governor of New-York, having heard the captain obſerve, that a young man, a paſſenger on board his veſſel, had a great number of books, requeſted him to conduct me to his houſe. I accepted the invitation, and would have carried Collins along with me, if he had been ſober. The governor received me with great politeneſs, ſhewed me his library, which was a very large one, and we talked a long time together about books and authors. This was the ſecond governor who had honoured me with his attention; and to a poor boy, as I at that time was, theſe little adventures did not fail to be uncommonly agreeable.

We now ſet off for Philadelphia: I procured the money that was due to Vernon, upon the road, and but for the aid of this ſupply we ſhould have been unable, without great difficulty, to have performed our journey.

Collins was deſirous of being employed in ſome merchant's counting-houſe; but although he had many excellent recommendations, either his breath or his countenance apparently betrayed the bad habits that he had contracted, for he did not ſucceed in any of his applications, ſo that he continued to lodge and board along with me, and at my expence.

Knowing that I was in poſſeſſion of Vernon's money, he was continually begging a loan of part of it, always promiſing to reimburſe me the moment he found employment. In fine, he prevailed upon me to give him ſo much of it that I became exceedingly uneaſy at the idea of what I ſhould do, in caſe I ſhould

be

be obliged to reſtore the ſum. His attachment for liquor did not in the leaſt abate, and this circumſtance contributed not a little to occaſion a great coolneſs, and even diſagreement between us; for when he had drank a little too much, he was exceedingly quarrelſome.

Happening one day to be in a boat on the Delaware, with ſome other young men, he refuſed to row in his turn.

"You ſhall row me home," ſaid he, "to my "lodgings." "We ſhall not row you an inch," replied I; "You ſhall," added he, "or elſe re-"main all night upon the water!" "Come! come!" cried our companions, "what does it ſignify whether "he rows or not?"

Being, however, exceedingly exaſperated againſt him, on account of his mean conduct, I continued to refuſe to proceed any farther; on this, he ſwore that if I did not row, he would throw me over-board. He accordingly proceeded towards me, walking at the ſame time acroſs the benches.

As ſoon as he was within reach of me, I ſtretched out my hand, ſeized hold of him by the breeches, and riſing up briſkly at the ſame time, I threw him headforemoſt into the river. I well knew that he was a good ſwimmer, I was not therefore in the leaſt apprehenſion for his life; in the mean while, before he was able to recover himſelf and board the boat, we got to a little diſtance and entirely out of his reach, by means of our oars.

Every time that he approached towards us, we aſked him, if he would row? and we gave him at the ſame time a few ſtrokes with our oars, in order to oblige him to deſiſt from boarding us. He was nearly choaked with the exceſs of his rage, and obſtinately refuſed to promiſe to aſſiſt us. Perceiving that his ſtrength began to fail, we at length hauled him into the boat, and brought him home quite wet to his lodgings. After this adventure, our coolneſs augmented daily.

At length a captain of a veſſel who traded to the Weſt-Indies, and who was commiſſioned to procure a tutor for the ſon of a rich planter in Barbadoes, happening to fall in with him, propoſed to carry him to that iſland, in order to fill that ſituation. He accepted this offer and left me, with a promiſe to remit me part of his ſalary by way of repayment of the ſum he ſtood indebted to me, but I never afterwards received any intelligence whatever concerning him.

CHAP. IV.

Our Author ſpends a Sum of Money intruſted to his Care—Curious Anecdote relative to Cod-Fiſh—Project for eſtabliſhing a new Sect—Some Account of a Vegetable Diet—A Poetical Conteſt—He is ſtill patroniſed by the Governor—Departs from Philadelphia—Is groſsly deceived by his Patron—Arrives in London—Preſents his Letters of Credit—Is extremely uneaſy relative to his future Conduct in Life—Some Account of Governor Sir William Keith.

THE appropriation of the ſum of money depoſited in my hands, and belonging to Mr. Vernon, was one of the firſt grand errors in my life, and this circumſtance fully proves that my father was not much deceived in his judgment, when he ſuppoſed me to be as yet too young to be entruſted with the management of any buſineſs of importance. Sir William Keith, however, on reading his letter, obſerved that he was by far too prudent, that there was a great difference between individuals, and, that as diſcretion did not always accompany maturity of years, ſo youth on the contrary was not always deprived of it.

"Since he will not contribute to your eſtabliſh-
"ment, (continues he,) I will undertake to do it my-
"ſelf. Give me a liſt of the various articles which
"are neceſſary to be brought from England, and I
"will ſend for them directly; you may reim-
"burſe me, whenever your ſituation permits you.

"I

" I am determined to have a good printer here, and " I am ſure that you will ſucceed."

He ſpoke this with ſuch an appearance of cordiality and friendſhip, that I did not doubt for a ſingle moment of the ſincerity of his profeſſions. I had hitherto been ſilent in Philadelphia, relative to his promiſes, and I ſtill continued to keep them a ſecret. If it had been known that I relied upon the governor's word, doubtleſs I ſhould have found ſome friend better acquainted with his character than myſelf, who would have adviſed me not to have truſted to it; for I learned in the end, that he was well known to be very liberal in promiſes, but that he always forgot to fulfil them. Having never ſolicited any favour from him, how was it poſſible for me to have divined that his profeſſions were inſincere? I actually looked upon him as the beſt man in the whole world.

I ſoon after preſented him with a liſt of the articles neceſſary for a ſmall printing-houſe, the expence of which might amount, according to my calculation, to about £.100 ſterling. He approved of every thing, but aſked me at the ſame time, if my preſence would not be neceſſary in England, in order to ſuperintend the completion of his order; to inſpect and chooſe the letter-preſs, and to take care that every article ſhould be excellent in its kind? " You will alſo be " able, (adds he,) to form a connexion there, and " eſtabliſh a correſpondence in the book and paper " lines."

I acknowledged that ſuch a ſcheme would be exceedingly advantageous, " That being the caſe," ſays

he, "be ſure to get every thing ready, in order to "proceed with the Anna."

This was the annual veſſel, and the only one at that time which made regular voyages between London and Philadelphia; but as ſome months would elapſe previous to the ſailing of the Anna, I continued to work with Keimer. I was not, however, without great uneaſineſs in reſpect to the ſums which Collins had borrowed of me; indeed I experienced the moſt violent and continual fears in regard to Vernon, who, however, very luckily for me, did not demand his money until ſome years afterwards.

I believe that I have omitted a little incident in the recital of my firſt voyage from Boſton to Philadelphia, which I ſhall now relate, becauſe it will not be altogether miſplaced here.

During a calm, which ſtopped us exactly oppoſite Block-iſland, our ſailors made the neceſſary preparations in order to catch ſome cod. Until that moment, I had perſiſted in my reſolution of never eating any thing that had life in it, and upon this occaſion, full of the ideas of my maſter Tryon, I looked upon the taking of every fiſh, as a ſpecies of wanton murder, committed without any manner of provocation whatever, becauſe not one of them had ever done, or could ever do, the leaſt poſſible evil to any perſon, which could juſtify ſo cruel a maſſacre! This manner of reaſoning ſeemed to me to be unanſwerable; but I had formerly been a great lover of fiſh; and when it came out of the frying pan, it had a moſt inviting ſmell!

I balanced

I balanced for ſome time between my principles and my appetite, until I began to recollect, that on cutting up theſe very cod, I had perceived a multitude of little fiſh, taken out of their ſtomachs. On this I inſtantly ſaid to myſelf, "If you thus devour one "another, I ſee no manner of reaſon why we ſhould "not eat you!"

In conſequence of this, I inſtantly ſat down to the cod-fiſh, with a moſt excellent appetite, and have continued ever ſince to eat like the reſt of the world, returning however, from time to time, and by intervals, to a vegetable diet.

How commodious it is to be a *reaſonable creature*, who knows either how to find, or to invent arguments for juſtifying every thing, he is deſirous of doing! . . . . . .

. . . . . .

I lived in great friendſhip with Keimer, and we agreed exceedingly, becauſe he never once dreamed of my project of ſetting up in buſineſs for myſelf. He ſtill preſerved a great part of his enthuſiaſm, and was uncommonly fond of argument; we accordingly had frequent diſputations together. I was ſo accuſtomed to puzzle him with my Socratic method, and had confounded him ſo often by my queſtions, which at firſt appeared to be very far diſtant from the point in agitation, and yet led to it, inſenſibly embarraſſing him in difficulties, and contradiction, which he could not get rid of, that he at length became ridiculouſly circumſpect. He accordingly would never make any reply to the moſt ſimple and familiar queſtion,

queſtion, without firſt aſking me, "What do you "pretend to infer from that?"

Notwithſtanding this, he had formed ſuch a high idea of my ability in refuting the arguments of an adverſary, that he ſeriouſly propoſed to me, to be his colleague in a project he had formed of eſtabliſhing a new ſect. He was to preach the doctrines, and it was to be my buſineſs to confound all our opponents. However, when he began to explain himſelf to me, relative to his *dogmas*, I perceived a great number of whimſical conceits, which I refuſed to allow, at leaſt, unleſs my own opinions were permitted to be mixed with them; in ſhort, I would not conſent to any thing if he did not agree to adopt ſome of my principles.

Keimer wore his beard long, becauſe it is ſaid in the law of Moſes, "Thou ſhalt not cut the corners "of thy beard." He alſo ſtrictly obſerved the ſabbath or the ſeventh-day; and theſe, according to him, were two eſſential points.

They both diſpleaſed me; notwithſtanding this, I conſented to admit them upon the expreſs condition, that he would agree to eſtabliſh it as a precept, not to uſe any food appertaining to the animal kingdom. He doubted greatly whether his conſtitution would be able to ſupport ſuch a *regimen*, but I aſſured him on the contrary, that it would greatly contribute to the eſtabliſhment of his health.

He was naturally an epicure, and I was determined to do every thing in my power in order to mortify his appetites.

He

He conſented at length to try the *regimen* propoſed, and I agreed to keep him company. We accordingly ſubmitted ourſelves to it, during three whole months.

A woman in the neighbourhood, purchaſed, cooked, and brought us our victuals; I gave her a liſt of upwards of forty diſhes, which ſhe was to prepare for us at different times, and into the compoſition of which, neither fiſh nor fleſh was admitted. This fantaſtical mode of life was the more agreeable to me, at this time, becauſe it was extremely cheap, for the expences of our houſe-keeping did not exceed eighteen-pence a week.

I have ſince kept *Lent* many times in the ſame manner, and nearly with the utmoſt poſſible ſtrictneſs, and I have for the moſt part ſuddenly ſubſtituted this *regimen* to my ordinary food, without experiencing the leaſt inconvenience; this circumſtance makes me look upon the advice generally given of accuſtoming one'ſelf by degrees to the change of diet, as a matter of very little importance.

I continued in good health and ſpirits, but poor Keimer ſuffered greatly. He became in a ſhort time quite weary of the enterprize, and began to ſigh after the *fleſh-pots* of Egypt.

At length he ordered a ſucking pig to be roaſted, and invited me, along with two females of our acquaintance, to dine with him; but the pig having been brought home a little ſooner than was expected, he could not reſiſt the temptation ariſing from ſo delicious

cious a morſel, and actually devoured the whole, before our arrival.

In the mean time I paid great attention to Miſs Read. I had much affection and eſteem for her, and I had ſome reaſon to believe that ſhe entertained ſimilar ſentiments in regard to me. But we were both very young, neither of us being much above eighteen years of age; and as I was upon the point of taking a long voyage; her mother thought that it would not be prudent to permit our attachment to go any farther lengths at preſent, becauſe if we were to be married, it would be much more convenient that this ceremony ſhould take place after my return, when, as I had given out, I was to be eſtabliſhed in buſineſs for myſelf. Perhaps ſhe alſo thought that my expectations were not ſo well founded as I imagined.

My principal companions at this time, were Charles Oſborne, Joſeph Watſon, and James Ralph, all of them very fond of reading. The two firſt were clerks to, and lived with Mr. Charles Brockden, one the principal attornies in the town; the other was a clerk in a merchant's counting-houſe.

Watſon was a young man of great integrity, very pious and ſenſible: The others were a little more relaxed in regard to their religious principles, particularly Ralph, whoſe faith as well as that of Collins, had been ſtaggered by myſelf; they both made me ſuffer ſufficiently afterwards, by way of puniſhment for this conduct. Oſborne poſſeſſed great ſenſibility, was frank and open in his conduct, and exceedingly attached to his

his friends, but he affected too much to be a critic in regard to literature.

Ralph was witty, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent. I never, in the whole courſe of my life, met with a more agreeable ſpeaker. Both of them were paſſionately attached to poetry, and had begun to compoſe little ſonnets, &c.

We four were accuſtomed to take very agreeable walks every Sunday, in the woods bordering on the Schuylkill. We read in common, and then conferred on the ſubject before us. Ralph ſeemed determined to give himſelf entirely up to the ſtudy of poetry. He flattered himſelf that he ſhould be able to make great progreſs in this career, and even to acquire a fortune by means of it. He pretended that the greateſt poets, on their firſt attempting to write, had committed as many miſtakes as he himſelf had done.

Oſborne endeavoured to diſſuade him from it, aſſuring him at the ſame time, that he did not poſſeſs a poetical genius, and adviſed him above all things, to ſtick by the profeſſion to which he had been brought up.

"In the mercantile line," ſaid he, "you will "be able by means of your diligence and aſſiduity, "even without a capital, to procure employment as a "factor, and you may thus, in time, acquire ſufficient "ſtock to begin trade with upon your own account."

As for me, I approved greatly that he ſhould amuſe himſelf from time to time with poetry, but thought that this ſhould be done merely with a view to attain perfection in the language.

It

It was one day propoſed, that each of us, at the next interview, ſhould produce a piece of his own compoſition in verſe. Our object in this experiment was to improve each other, by means of our obſervations, our criticiſms, and our mutual corrections, and as the language and expreſſion was all we had in view, we excluded every idea of invention, agreeing that our common taſk ſhould be a verſion of the eighteenth Pſalm, in which the deſcent of the Divinity is deſcribed.

The epoch of our interview was juſt at hand, when Ralph called upon me, and told me that his taſk was prepared. I informed him that I had been too indolent to perform mine, becauſe, having but little inclination towards that ſpecies of literature, I had neglected to do any thing. On this, he produced the verſes which he had compoſed, and aſked me what I thought of them. I approved of them highly, becauſe they appeared to me to poſſeſs great and extraordinary merit.

On this he addreſſed me thus: "Oſborne will "never allow the leaſt credit to any thing of my "compoſition; his envy always dictates a thou-"ſand ill-natured criticiſms upon it. He is not ſo "jealous of you; I deſire therefore that you will "take this, and preſent it as your own. I ſhall pre-"tend not to have had time, and conſequently ſhall "not produce any thing: We ſhall then ſee what he "ſays on this ſubject." I immediately conſented to this little piece of roguery, and inſtantly tranſcribed

Ralph's taſk, in order to avoid the poſſibility of detection.

The day at length arrives, and we repair to the place of rendezvous.

Watſon's work was the firſt that was read. It poſſeſſed ſome beauties, but many defects. We then peruſed Oſborne's, it was far ſuperior; Ralph did great juſtice to it, for while he animadverted upon a few faults, he applauded its numerous perfections. He had nothing to produce, and it was now my turn.

I made a number of difficulties, and ſeemed deſirous of being excuſed; I had not ſufficient time to make the proper corrections, to poliſh the ſtile, &c. &c. None of my apologies were, however, admitted; it was neceſſary that I ſhould produce my compoſition; I accordingly complied; it was read over and over again. Watſon and Oſborne immediately renounced every idea of competition, and joined in applauding it. Ralph alone made a few criticiſms, and propoſed ſome corrections, but I ſtrenuouſly defended my manuſcript. Oſborne was violent againſt Ralph, and told him, that he was no better calculated to criticiſe than to write verſes, and that he had equally failed in the corrections he had hazarded, and the poetry he had promiſed, but neglected to produce.

As ſoon as the others had left me in order to return home, Oſborne expreſſed himſelf ſtill more ſtrongly in favour of what he imagined to be my production. He pretended to have been hitherto reſtrained

ſtrained by fear, leſt I ſhould think he meant to flatter me.

"But who would have imagined," added he, "that "Franklin was capable of ſuch a compoſition! What "painting! What ſtrength! What fire! He has "actually ſurpaſſed the original! In his ordinary "converſation he does not appear to give himſelf "any trouble about the choice of his words; he even "heſitates, and finds it difficult to expreſs his mean-"ing, and yet, good God! how he writes!"

At our next meeting, Ralph informed Oſborne of the trick we had played him, and he was rallied by us all on the occaſion.

This adventure confirmed Ralph in his reſolution of becoming a poet. I did every thing in my power in order to diſſuade him from it; but he continued to make verſes, until he read Pope, and this entirely cured him of his paſſion for the Muſes; he, however, became a moſt excellent proſe writer.

I ſhall ſpeak more about him by and by, but as I may not perhaps have occaſion to ſay any thing concerning the other two, I ſhall only obſerve here, that Watſon died in my arms a few years after. He was exceedingly regretted; for he was the moſt amiable of all our ſociety. Oſborne went to the Weſt Indies, where he became a famous advocate, and acquired a great deal of money; but he was cut off at a very early period of his life. We ſeriouſly agreed together, that whichever of us two died firſt, ſhould, if poſſible, return, and make an amicable viſit to the ſurvivor, in order to inform him fully in regard to a fu-

ture ſtate:—But he has never as yet fulfilled his engagement.

The governor appeared to be much delighted with my company, and invited me frequently to his houſe. He ſtill continued to ſpeak of his intention of eſtabliſhing me in buſineſs, as a thing decided upon. I was to carry along with me letters of recommendation to ſeveral of his friends, and eſpecially a letter of credit, in order to procure me my printing-preſs, types, paper, &c. &c. He put off the delivery of theſe letters from time to time, and always promiſed me that they ſhould be ready when I called next; but on my appearance ſomething continually interfered ſo as to prevent their delivery.

Theſe reiterated delays always took place, until the veſſel, the departure of which had been often procraſtinated, was at length ready to ſail; on that occaſion I once more waited upon Sir William, in order to take my leave, and receive my diſpatches. His ſecretary, Dr. Bird, came to me, and informed me, that the governor was extremely buſy, at preſent, but that he would be at Newcaſtle, before the veſſel could poſſibly drop down there, and that then I might depend upon the letters being delivered to me.

Ralph was determined to accompany me in this voyage, although he was married and had a child. It was believed that he undertook it merely with a deſign of eſtabliſhing a correſpondence in England, and of procuring merchandize, in order to be ſold by commiſſion; but I afterwards diſcovered, that having

having ſome occaſion to complain of his wife's family, he was determined to leave her with them, and reſolved never more to return to America.

After having taken leave of my friends and made an exchange of vows with Miſs Read, I left Philadelphia.

The veſſel caſt anchor at Newcaſtle; the governor was there, and I repaired to his houſe. His ſecretary, who received me with great politeneſs, informed me from him, that I could not ſee him then, being engaged in buſineſs of the utmoſt importance, but that he would ſend my letters on board, and that he wiſhed me a good voyage, and ſpeedy return, &c. &c.

I now repaired on board the veſſel, exceedingly aſtoniſhed, but yet without conceiving the leaſt doubt, as to his intentions.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, a famous advocate of Philadelphia, had taken a paſſage on board the ſame ſhip for himſelf and his ſon, and in conjunction with Mr. Denham, a quaker merchant, and Meſſrs. Oniam and Ruſſel, the owners of an iron work in Maryland, had hired the great cabin; ſo that Ralph and I were obliged to lie along with the ſailors, and as we were unknown to any perſon in the veſſel, we were treated like the common men.

Mr. Hamilton and his ſon James, who was afterwards governor, happened to return from Newcaſtle to Philadelphia, being recalled at a great expence, in order to plead a cauſe relative to a veſſel that had been ſeized, ſo that they did not proceed on the voyage.

A very ſhort time before we ſet ſail, Colonel French came on board, and ſhewed me many civilities; from that moment a great deal more attention was paid to me; and the other paſſengers having invited me and my friend Ralph to occupy the beds which the Meſſrs. Hamiltons were to have ſlept in, we accepted of their offer without any difficulty, and found ourſelves in a far more commodious ſituation than we had hitherto experienced.

Having learned that Colonel French had brought on board the governor's diſpatches, I aſked the captain for the letters which were to be intruſted to my care. He informed me they had been all put together in the letter bag, which he could not then untie, but added, that before their arrival in England, I ſhould moſt undoubtedly receive them. I was ſatisfied for the moment with this anſwer, and we ſoon after proceeded on our voyage.

The paſſengers in the great cabin were of a very ſociable diſpoſition, and we were exceedingly lucky in regard to proviſions, for we not only had our own, but a large quantity of poultry, &c. which Mr. Hamilton had left on board. In the courſe of the paſſage, Mr. Denham contracted a friendſhip for me, which ended but with his life. In other reſpects our voyage was not very pleaſant, for we had exceedingly diſagreeable weather.

When we arrived in the Channel, the captain kept his word with me, and gave me permiſſion to ſearch the bag for the governor's letters. I did not find a ſingle one upon which my name was written, or on

which it was indicated that it was to be conveyed by my means. I picked out ſix or ſeven however, which I judged by the directions to be thoſe which had been promiſed me, more eſpecially as one of them was addreſſed to Baſkerville, the King's printer, and another to a ſtationer, who was the firſt perſon whom I met with on my arrival. I accordingly preſented it to him as coming from Governor Keith.

"I am not acquainted with the man you mean," ſays he, but on opening the letter, he exclaimed, "O "it is from Reddleſden! I have known for ſome "time paſt that he is a great raſcal, and I neither "wiſh to have any connection with, nor receive any "letters from him." Having ſaid this, he inſtantly put the letter in queſtion into my hand, turned round upon his heel, and left me in order to ſerve ſome of his cuſtomers.

I was quite aſtoniſhed at diſcovering that this letter was not written by the governor, and recalling now, for the firſt time, a variety of circumſtances to my memory, I began at length to doubt of his ſincerity. I waited therefore upon my friend Denham, and explained the whole affair. He inſtantly made me acquainted with governor Keith's character, and informed me that there was not the leaſt probability that he had written a ſingle line in my favour. He added, that no one who was acquainted with him ever truſted to his word, and he laughed heartily at my idea of receiving a letter of credit, from a perſon who could procure no credit for himſelf.

As I evinced ſome uneaſineſs relative to the part I had now to take, he adviſed me to endeavour to find employment in my own profeſſion. "You will here, ſays he, "be ſure to add to your ſtock of know-"ledge, and this circumſtance will enable you to "eſtabliſh yourſelf more advantageouſly, on your "return to America."

We were as much convinced as the ſtationer was, that lawyer Riddleſden was a great rogue. He had nearly ruined Miſs Read's father, by prevalling upon him to become ſurety for him. We alſo diſcovered by this letter, that he had entered into a ſecret intrigue againſt Mr. Hamilton, who he ſuppoſed was gone to Europe in the ſame ſhip with us, and that the governor was privy to, and a party in the plot.

Denham, who was one of Hamilton's friends, was of opinion, that he ought to be informed of this circumſtance. In fine, as ſoon as he had arrived in England, which was but a few weeks after us, I went to ſee him; and partly from regard to him, and partly from reſentment againſt Keith, I delivered him up the letter itſelf. He thanked me in the moſt expreſſive manner, for the favour I did him, the information contained in it being of the utmoſt importance; and from that moment he conceived a friendſhip for me, which was very advantageous, and uſeful on a variety of occaſions.

What is one to think of a governor like this, who acted ſuch a pitiful part, and impoſed ſo groſsly upon a poor young man, deſtitute of experience?

It

It had actually become a *habit* with Sir William Keith. He wiſhed to pleaſe all the world, and having but little to give, he was prodigal of his promiſes. Notwithſtanding this he was a very ſenſible and accompliſhed man, an excellent ſcholar, and a good governor for the people over whom he preſided, although he was not eſteemed by his conſtituents the proprietors, whoſe inſtructions he often neglected.

Many of our beſt laws were not only enacted under his adminiſtration, but actually penned by himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Author leads a diſſipated Life in London—He lodges in the ſame Houſe with Ralph—Makes Love to his Miſtreſs—Becomes Author, and writes a Metaphyſical Work in Anſwer to Wollaſton—Is introduced to Dr. Mandeville, Author of the Fable of the Bees—Some Account of that Gentleman—Removes to another Printing-Houſe—Drinks Water only, and is yet ſtronger than ſuch of his Companions as drink Beer—Enacts ſeveral wholeſome Laws among his fellow Workmen—Ingenious Diſſertation on the folly of ſwallowing Strong Beer—Anecdotes of a Nun—His excellence in the Art of Swimming—He is engaged as a Merchant's Clerk, and returns to Philadelphia.

RALPH and I were inſeparable companions; we lodged together at the rate of three ſhillings and a half per week; this was all that we were then in a ſituation to afford. He diſcovered ſeveral of his relations who reſided in London, but they were all exceedingly poor, and totally unable to aſſiſt him. He told me about this time, that it was his intention to remain in England, and that he was determined never more to return to Philadelphia. He was abſolutely deſtitute of money, the little he had been able to procure, being ſcarce ſufficient to pay for his paſſage.

I was ſtill in poſſeſſion of fifteen *piſtoles*, and he applied to me from time to time, in order to aſſiſt him, until he ſhould get ſome employment.

Imagining

Imagining that he poſſeſſed the neceſſary talents for becoming an actor, he had a prodigious inclination for a theatrical life; but Wilkes, to whom he addreſſed himſelf, deſired him to give over every idea of that profeſſion, it being, as he frankly told him, totally impoſſible for him to ſucceed in it. He then applied to Roberts, a bookſeller in Paternoſter-Row, to whom he propoſed to write a weekly paper, after the manner of the Spectator, but the conditions not being agreeable, his propoſition was rejected. He afterwards endeavoured to be employed as a copying-clerk for the law ſtationers in the neighbourhood of the Temple; but he did not find any place vacant.

As to me, I was immediately admitted into the employment of Mr. Palmer, at that time a famous printer in St. Bartholomew's-Cloſe, where I remained upwards of a twelve-month.

I was exceedingly aſſiduous at my buſineſs, but I ſpent nearly every farthing I earned in company with Ralph. The play-houſes and other places of public entertainment which we frequented together, having exhauſted all my *piſtoles*; we thenceforward were obliged to live from *hand to mouth*.

He appeared to have entirely forgotten his wife and child, and as for me, I had alſo nearly forgotten my engagements with Miſs Read, to whom I never wrote but one letter, and that merely to inform her, that I ſhould not return ſo ſoon as I had expected. This was another of the great errors of my life, which I ſhould deſire to correct, were I to begin it once more. In ſhort, we led ſuch a round of diſſipation, that

that it became utterly impoſſible for me to pay my paſſage.

I was employed by Palmer, to compoſe the ſecond edition of "Wollaſton's Religion of Nature." Some of his reaſoning not appearing to me to be well founded, I wrote a little metaphyſical eſſay, in which I made ſome remarks upon theſe paſſages. It was entitled, "a Diſſertation on Liberty and Neceſſity, "Pleaſure and Pain." I inſcribed it to my friend Ralph, and having put it to preſs, threw off ſeveral copies of it.

This circumſtance occaſioned Mr. Palmer to entertain a greater reſpect for me than before, and to look upon me as a young man of abilities, although he made me many ſerious reproaches on the principles maintained in my work, which, according to him, was heatheniſh and abominable. The impreſſion of this tract was another error in my life.

During the time that I lodged in Little Britain, I formed an acquaintance with a bookſeller of the name of Wilcox, whoſe ſhop adjoined the houſe in which I reſided: He had an immenſe collection of books upon ſale; circulating libraries were not then in faſhion. It was reſolved in conſequence of a reaſonable allowance agreed upon between us, the amount of which I do not at preſent recollect, that I ſhould enjoy the liberty of reading all the books I choſe, which were afterwards to be returned to him. I looked upon this bargain as very advantageous to me, and profited as much as poſſible by it.

My

My pamphlet having fallen into the hands of a ſurgeon of the name of Lyons, author of a book entitled "The Infallability of Human Judgment," this circumſtance occaſioned an extraordinary intimacy between us. He teſtified a great deal of eſteem for me, came often to ſee me, in order to converſe with me upon theſe matters, and introduced me to Doctor Mandeville, author of the "Fable of the Bees," who was preſident, and indeed the life and ſoul of a club, held at a tavern in Cheapſide.

He was a very facetious and amuſing man. He preſented me at Batſon's coffee-houſe to Doctor Pemberton, who promiſed to introduce me to Sir Iſaac Newton, an event which I was very eager to bring about: But he never kept his promiſe.

I had brought ſome curioſities along with me from America, the principal of which was a purſe compoſed of the filaments of the *Aſbeſtos*, which was cleaned by means of fire. Sir Hans Sloane having heard ſome perſon mention this, came to ſee me, and invited me to his houſe in Bloomſbury Square, where after having ſhewn me all the rare productions of his collection, he perſuaded me to depoſit this among the reſt, paying me, however, a very liberal price for it.

A young woman who was a milliner, and had a ſhop as I underſtood, cloſe to the Royal Exchange, happened to lodge in our houſe. She was at once lively and ſenſible; ſhe had received a ſuperior education; her converſation was therefore very entertaining and agreeable.

Ralph

Ralph read comedies to her every evening, and this occaſioned a great intimacy to take place between them. She removed to another lodging and he followed her. They lived ſometime together, and he continued ſtill deſtitute of any employment whatever. Having a child, her income did not prove ſufficient for the maintenance of all three, he therefore took the reſolution to leave London, and reſolved to keep a ſchool in the country. He thought himſelf well calculated to ſucceed in this ſcheme, as he wrote a very fine hand, and was well acquainted with arithmetic and book-keeping.

He, however, regarded this ſituation as infinitely below his abilities, and hoping for brighter proſpects and happier days hereafter, during which he might be aſhamed of having exerciſed ſuch a degrading profeſſion, he changed his name, and did me the honour to adopt mine.

He actually ſent me a letter a ſhort time afterwards, in order to inform me that he was eſtabliſhed in a little day ſchool in an obſcure village, where if I recollect right, he taught ten or a dozen children to read and write at ſix-pence ſterling a week each. He recommended Mrs. T——— to my care, and requeſted me to addreſs my anſwer to Mr. Franklin, ſchool maſter at N——— in Berkſhire.

He continued to write frequently, and to convey to me large fragments of an Epic poem, which he was at that time compoſing, and upon which he demanded my remarks and my corrections. I accordingly tranſmitted them from time to time; but I conſtantly

endeavoured

endeavoured to perſuade him to abandon this kind of purſuit.

Young happening much about this period to publiſh one of his ſatires; I copied, and tranſmitted that part of it to him in which the author points out the contempt into which the poets of the day had fallen, and demonſtrates the folly of cultivating the Muſes, with the hope of riſing in the world by their means. Here follow the verſes I allude to:

"Th' abandon'd manners of our writing train
"May tempt mankind to think religion vain;
"But in their fate, their habit, and their mien,
"That Gods there are, is evidently ſeen:
"Heav'n ſtands abſolv'd by vengeance on their pen,
"And marks the murderers of fame from men:
"Thro' meagre jaws they draw their venal breath,
"As ghaſtly as their brothers in Macbeth:
"Their feet thro' faithleſs leather meets the dirt,
"And oftner chang'd their principles than ſhirt:
"The tranſient veſtments of theſe frugal men,
"Haſten to paper for our mirth again:
"Too ſoon (O merry melancholy fate!)
"They beg in rhyme, and warble thro' a grate;
"The man lampoon'd, forgets it at the ſight;
"The friend thro' pity gives, the foe thro' ſpight;
"And tho' full conſcious of his injur'd purſe,
"Lintot relents, nor Curll can with them worſe."

"An Author 'tis a venerable name!
"How few deſerve it and what numbers claim!
"Unbleſs'd with ſenſe, above their peers refin'd,
"Who ſhall ſtand up, dictators to mankind?

"Nay,

" Nay, who dare ſhine, if not in virtue's cauſe?
" That ſole proprietor of juſt applauſe.
" Ye reſtleſs men! who pant for letter'd praiſe,
" With whom would you conſult to gain the bays?
" With thoſe great authors whoſe fam'd works you read?
" 'Tis well; go, then, conſult the laurell'd ſhade,
" What anſwer will the laurell'd ſhade return?
" Hear it and tremble, he commands you burn
" The nobleſt works, his envy'd genius writ,
" That boaſts of nought more excellent than wit.
" If this be true, as 'tis a truth moſt dread,
" Wo to the page which has not that to plead!
" Fontaine and Chaucer dying, wiſh'd unwrote
" The ſprightlieſt efforts of their wanton thought:
" Sidney and Waller, brigheſt ſons of fame,
" Condemn'd the charm of ages to the flame.

" Thus ends your courted fame—does lucre then,
" The ſacred thirſt of gold, betray your pen?
" In proſe 'tis blameable, in verſe 'tis worſe,
" Provokes the Muſe, extorts Apollo's curſe;
" His ſacred influence never ſhould be ſold;
" 'Tis arrant ſimony to ſing for gold;
" 'Tis immortality ſhould fire your mind:
" Scorn a leſs paymaſter than all mankind."

YOUNG, Vol. III. Epiſt. II. p. 70.

But all my efforts were uſeleſs, and my labour entirely loſt, for ſheet upon ſheet of the poem continued to arrive by every poſt.

In the mean time Mrs. T——— having loſt all her friends, as well as her trade on his account, was often reduced to the utmoſt diſtreſs. On thoſe occaſions ſhe had recourſe to me, and I lent her all

all the money in my power, in order to reſcue her from her misfortunes.

I indeed began to conceive too great a regard for this young woman. Being at that time entirely deſtitute of any curb from religion, and taking advantage of the neceſſity ſhe was under of applying to me, I endeavoured to take ſome familiarities with her, (another error in my life,) which ſhe repelled with a proper degree of ſpirit and reſentment. She even informed Ralph of my behaviour, and this adventure occaſioned a quarrel between us.

Upon his return to London, he gave me to underſtand, that he looked upon all the obligations which he was under to me, to be entirely annihilated by my conduct; from this I concluded that I could never hope to be reimburſed either the money which I had lent him, or advanced her upon his account. I was the leſs afflicted at this circumſtance, as he was at preſent utterly unable to pay me; I conſidered alſo, that although I had loſt his friendſhip, I was eaſed at the ſame time of a very heavy burden.

I began from that moment to be more œconomical, and to ſave a little money in order to ſupply the wants of futurity.

The printing-houſe of Mr. Watts, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, being ſtill more conſiderable than that in which I was engaged, it was probable that I might find it turn out more to my account, to be employed there. I accordingly preſented myſelf and was inſtantly admitted; I remained there all the reſt of the time I ſtaid in London.

Upon my firſt entrance into this printing-houſe, I choſe to work at the preſs, becauſe I imagined that I ſtood in need of that corporal exerciſe which I had been accuſtomed to in America, where the workmen are preſſmen and compoſitors by turns.

I in the mean time drank nothing but water, while all the other workmen, to the number of fifty, were extremely fond of porter: Yet I was able to carry as great a weight with one hand, as any of them could do with two. They confeſſed upon this, and a number of other occaſions, that the *Aquatic American*, as they were pleaſed to call me, was much ſtronger than them, although they drank *ſtrong beer*.

A boy from a neighbouring public houſe, was conſtantly employed during the whole day, in bringing porter to the workmen. My companion at the preſs drank a pint every morning before breakfaſt, a pint at breakfaſt with his bread and cheeſe, another between breakfaſt and dinner, one at dinner, another after dinner about ſix o'clock in the afternoon, and one more after he had finiſhed his day's work.

I looked upon this to be a moſt deteſtable cuſtom; but it was abſolutely neceſſary, according to him, to drink ſtrong beer, in order to enable him to work.

I endeavoured to convince him, that the additional corporal ſtrength produced by the beer, could only be in proportion to the quantity of grain, or barley diſſolved in the water, out of which the beer was compoſed; that there was much more in a half-penny worth of bread than in a pint of beer, and that

if

if he ate that quantity of bread with a pint of water, he would draw more nouriſhment, and, conſequently, more ſtrength from it than from a pint of beer. This mode of reaſoning did not prevent him however from continuing to drink, and to pay every Saturday night to the amount of four or five ſhillings on account of this villainous liquor; an expence from which I was entirely exempted. It is in this manner that theſe poor devils remain always in miſery.

After the lapſe of a few weeks, Watts having occaſion for a compoſitor, I quitted the preſs buſineſs. The other compoſitors on this deſired me to pay my *footing* once more, but I looked upon ſuch a demand as an impoſition, having paid it already to the preſſmen. The maſter was entirely of my way of thinking, and ordered me not to comply with ſo unreaſonable a requeſt. I remained accordingly for two or three weeks without being admitted *a member of the ſociety*. I was in conſequence looked upon as an excommunicated perſon, and if I happened to be abſent at any time, a few minutes from my buſineſs, I experienced the effects of their malice in a thouſand trifles.

On my return I was ſure to find my letter mixed together and confuſed, my pages tranſpoſed, my matter out of order, &c. &c. and all was attributed to the *Spirit of the Chapel* *, who according to

* This is the name given by the workmen to the Printing Houſe.

them always vexed thoſe who were not regularly admitted.

I was at length obliged notwithſtanding my maſter's protection, to ſubmit myſelf ſo far as to pay their demand; being fully convinced, that it is a great folly not to be on good terms with thoſe among whom one is obliged to live conſtantly.

After this, I was well received by all of them, and I ſoon acquired a conſiderable influence over their minds. I propoſed ſome alterations in the laws of the *Chapel*, and I had intereſt enough to get them paſſed in ſpite of all oppoſition.

My example had ſuch an effect upon them that many of them renounced their breakfaſt of beer, and bread and cheeſe, and procured from a neighbouring houſe in the ſame manner as myſelf, a large porringer of water gruel with a lump of butter in the middle of it, and ſome chippings of bread and a little pepper ſtrewed on the top. This was a much better breakfaſt, and did not coſt more than the price of a pint of beer; that is to ſay, three half-pence, while on the other hand it kept the head infinitely more clear, and enabled them to work better.

Thoſe who continued to gorge themſelves with beer all day long, by neglecting to pay their *ſcore* often loſt all their credit at the ale-houſe. On ſuch occaſions they had always recourſe to me, in order that I might paſs my word for them; "their light "being out!" as they termed it. I placed myſelf at the pay table every Saturday evening, in order to be reimburſed

reimburſed the ſmall ſums that I had ſtood ſurety for during the preceding week.

This circumſtance, added to my reputation of poſſeſſing a turn for ſatire, contributed to ſupport my importance in the chapel. Beſides this, I recommended myſelf to my maſter by my application and aſſiduity, for I never kept St. Monday. My extraordinary quickneſs at compoſition, was always ſure to procure me ſuch works as were of a preſſing nature, which are generally the moſt lucrative; I therefore was enabled to live comfortably, and to paſs my time very agreeably.

My apartment in Little Britain being too far diſtant from the printing-office, I removed to another in Duke Street Lincoln's Inn Fields, exactly oppoſite the Roman Catholic chapel; it was at the back of an Italian warehouſe. A widow kept the houſe; her family conſiſted of a daughter, a female ſervant, and a ſhopman, who lodged in an adjoining ſtreet.

After having ſent an order to make ſome enquiries relating to me, at the place in which I lived before, ſhe conſented to let me an apartment at the ſame price (three ſhillings and ſix-pence, a week) contenting herſelf with ſo little, ſhe ſaid, on account of the ſafety that would accrue to ſingle women, from the circumſtance of having a man to ſleep in the ſame houſe with them.

She herſelf was a woman of a certain age, and the daughter of a clergyman; ſhe had been educated in the Proteſtant Religion, but her huſband, whoſe memory ſhe greatly revered, had converted her to the

Catholic church. She had lived much among people of diſtinction, and had thouſands of anecdotes by heart, ſome of which extended as far back as the reign of Charles II.

She had loſt the uſe of her legs by means of the gout; and was often confined to her chamber, ſo that ſhe was frequently deſirous of having company to viſit her. Her converſation was ſo exceedingly amuſing to me, that I was eager to ſpend the evening with her, as often as ſhe requeſted me. Our ſupper conſiſted of nothing more than half an anchovy a piece, laid upon a ſlice of bread, with a little butter, and half a pint of ale between us. This appears to be a ſcanty meal, but the regale conſiſted entirely in her converſation.

The care I took to return at an early hour, and the little trouble that I occaſioned to the family, made her dread the idea of a ſeparation, ſo that when I mentioned a lodging that had been pointed out to me, much nearer the place where I worked, and which was to be let at two ſhillings a week, an offer which my deſire of ſaving money induced me to accept of, ſhe requeſted me to give up every idea of a change, as ſhe herſelf would take off two ſhillings from the ſum I then paid her. Thus my lodgings coſt me no more than eighteen-pence per week, during the reſt of the time I remained in London.

A maiden lady of 70 years of age lived in the moſt obſcure and retired manner in a garret in the ſame houſe. The following particulars concerning her, were communicated to me, by my landlady:

She

She was a Roman Catholic, who in her early youth had been ſent to the continent, where ſhe entered into a convent with the intention of becoming a nun: but the climate diſagreeing with her, ſhe returned to England, and as there was not a nunnery in that country, ſhe had made a vow to lead a monaſtic life, as far, at leaſt, as circumſtances would permit her. In conſequence of this, ſhe had diſpoſed of moſt of her property, in order to employ the produce of it in works of charity, and had only reſerved 12l. per annum to herſelf, part of which ſmall ſum ſhe continued to diſtribute among the poor. To enable her to do this, ſhe lived entirely upon water gruel, and never lighted a fire but on purpoſe to make it.

She had lodged for a great number of years in the ſame garret, where ſhe was permitted to remain *gratis*, by the Catholic families who had taken this houſe in ſucceſſion, and who looked upon her reſidence with them as a bleſſing from Heaven. A Prieſt came daily in order to confeſs her.

"I have aſked her often, (ſaid my hoſteſs,) conſider-
"ing the manner in which ſhe lived, how it was poſ-
"ſible for her to find ſo much occupation for a Con-
"feſſor?" "O replied ſhe, it is impoſſible to avoid
"vain thoughts!"

I once received permiſſion to pay her a viſit: ſhe appeared gay, polite, and very agreeable in converſation. Her bed-chamber was neat, but ſhe had not any other moveables in it beſides a mattraſs, a table with a crucifix and a book upon it, a chair which

ſhe preſented me to ſit upon, and a picture of St. Veronica over the chimney-piece, in which that holy female diſplayed a handkerchief, with the face of Jeſus Chriſt miraculouſly imprinted upon it. The pious Catholic explained this circumſtance to me, with a very ſerious countenance.

Her face was pale, but ſhe never had been ſick, and I may give this as another example to prove how little money is neceſſary, in order to ſupport both life and health.

I got acquainted at the printing-office with a young man of the name of Wygate, whoſe parents were opulent, and who, in conſequence, had been better educated than the generality of printers. He was a very good Latin ſcholar, ſpoke French pretty well, and was very fond of reading. I taught him and ſeveral of his friends to ſwim; for this purpoſe I carried them two or three times to the river Thames, and after a little practice they acquired a certain degree of facility and even perfection in this exerciſe. We one day made a party in order to go to Chelſea, to ſee the College and the curioſities at Don Saltero's, with ſome gentlemen in the neighbourhood of London, to whom they introduced me. On our return, at the requeſt of the company whoſe curioſity had been excited by Wygate, I undreſſed myſelf, jumped into the river, and ſwam nearly from Chelſea to Black-Friars, making a variety of evolutions and performing ſeveral feats of activity, as well on the top of the water, as below it.

This

This afforded a great deal of pleaſure, ſatisfaction, and even aſtoniſhment, to thoſe to whom ſuch a ſpectacle was entirely new. I had been greatly addicted to, and had loved this delightful exerciſe from my early infancy. I was acquainted with, and practiſed all the motions and poſitions recommended by Thevenot, and had even invented ſome new ones myſelf, in which I endeavoured to unite grace with utility. I took great care to do my utmoſt to excel upon this occaſion, and I was really flattered with the admiration I had excited by my ſkill and activity.

Wygate who was exceedingly deſirous of excelling in this art, attached himſelf ſo much the more to me, as there was a great conformity between our ſtudies, and our habits of life. In ſhort he propoſed to me to make the tour of Europe together, and to defray the expences of our journey, by working in our profeſſion, in all the great cities which we might paſs through.

I was on the point of conſenting to this ſcheme. I even communicated it to my friend Mr. Denham, with whom I was always happy to paſs a leiſure hour. He diſſuaded me from this project, and adviſed me to think ſeriouſly of returning to Philadelphia, where he himſelf was determined ſhortly to repair. I ſhall here recount a circumſtance, which will ſerve to give ſome idea of the character of this worthy man.

He had been formerly a merchant in Briſtol. Having failed in buſineſs there, he made a compoſition with his creditors, and ſet out for America, where by means

means of an aſſiduous application to trade, he acquired a conſiderable fortune in a few years. On his return to England in the ſame veſſel with myſelf, as I have mentioned before, he invited all his former creditors to a feaſt. When they were aſſembled, he returned them many thanks for the kind manner in which they had treated him, and while they expected nothing more than a good dinner, each of the gueſts on changing his plate, found an order on a banker, for the payment of the remainder of the debt, beſides intereſt at 5 *per cent.*

He informed me, that he intended to return to America, and to carry out with him a large quantity of merchandize, with which he reſolved to open a * ſtore, and he moreover offered to take me out with him as a clerk in order to ſuperintend his books, to copy his letters, &c. &c. &c. He added that as ſoon as I ſhould become familiar with commercial matters, he would ſend me as a ſupercargo, with flour, pork, &c. &c. to the Weſt Indies, and procure me a variety of lucrative commiſſions; in ſhort, he obſerved, that with conduct and ability, I could not fail to eſtabliſh myſelf advantageouſly.

I was charmed with theſe propoſitions. London began to be hateful to me; the agreeable moments I had ſpent in Pennſylvania, were recalled to my memory, and I deſired once more to enjoy ſimilar ſcenes.

I accordingly engaged with Mr. Denham at £.50 *per annum*, Pennſylvania money. This was indeed a

* This is the uſual appellation both in America and the Weſt Indies, for a warehouſe.

leſs

leſs ſum than what I might have gained as a Compoſitor; but I had an infinitely more agreeable career opened to my ambition.

I now bid farewell, as I thought for the laſt time, to the printing-houſe, and delivered myſelf entirely up to the ſtudy of my new profeſſion, paſſing my whole time, either in viſiting the merchants with Mr. Denham in order to purchaſe the different articles he ſtood in need of, or running among the workmen, to haſten them in their operations, &c. &c. When all was put on board, I had then a few days of leiſure for myſelf.

During this ſhort interval, I happened one morning to be ſent for, by a perſon of diſtinction, with whoſe name only, I was acquainted: It was Sir William Wyndham; I repaired to him accordingly. He had heard a great deal, by what means I know not, about my ſwimming from Chelſea to Black-friars, and alſo that I had taught this art, in a few hours, to Wygate and ſeveral of his companions. His two ſons, he ſaid, were about to proceed upon their travels; he was deſirous that they ſhould firſt learn to ſwim, and he offered me a very liberal gratification, if I would undertake to teach them.

As they were not as yet arrived in town, and my ſtay in the capital was wholly uncertain, I was of courſe unable to accept his propoſition. I was, however, induced from this incident to believe, if I had choſen to have remained in England and opened a ſchool for *Natation*, that I ſhould in all human probability have gained a great deal of money. I was

ſo ſtruck with the idea at the moment, that, if the ſame propoſition had been ſuggeſted a little ſooner, I ſhould never have thought of returning to America.

You and I, ſeveral years afterwards, had a matter of greater conſequence to confer upon, with one of the ſons of this very Sir William Wyndham, who was created Earl of Egremont.—But let us not anticipate events.

I had paſſed in this manner eighteen months in London, working with great induſtry at my trade, and incurring no other expence than that ariſing from ſeeing a few plays, and purchaſing a ſmall collection of books.

My friend Ralph had, however, kept me in poverty; he owed me no leſs than £.27 which appeared to me to be ſo much money loſt; this was a great ſum deducted from my little ſavings. Notwithſtanding this, I loved him greatly, becauſe he poſſeſſed a number of very amiable qualities.

But although I had not improved my fortune, I had augmented my maſs of knowledge by reading many excellent books, and by converſing with men of letters, and ſeveral of thoſe who excelled in the Arts and Sciences, with whom I found means to form an acquaintance, and even to become intimate.

We ſet ſail from Graveſend, on the .... of July, 1726. I refer you for the incidents of our voyage to my journal, where you will find every thing minutely detailed.

We landed at Philadelphia on the .... of October following.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Our Author meets Governor Sir William Keith, on his return to Philidelphia—He hears that Miſs Read is married—Sickneſs and Death of Mr. Denham—He changes his Situation once more, and becomes a Printer again—Some Account of an Oxford Scholar—Diſpute with Keimer—Reconciliation—Paper Money—He removes to Burlington—Hiſtory of Iſaac Decon, Inſpector General of New Jerſey—Project of an Eſtabliſhment—A Diſſertation on Morality and Religion—He begins to doubt his Metaphyſical Principles—Reſolves to act with Honeſty in all his Dealings.

ON my return, Sir William Keith was no longer governor of Pennſylvania, having been diſpoſſeſſed of his employment, and replaced by Major Gordon. I met him walking in the ſtreets as a ſimple citizen; he appeared a little aſhamed at ſeeing me, but he paſſed without taking any notice of me, or even ſpeaking a ſingle word.

I myſelf ſhould have been equally aſhamed at ſeeing Miſs Read, if her family, deſpairing with good reaſon of my return, after receiving the letter I had ſent her, had not perſuaded her to give up every idea of me, and prevailed upon her to eſpouſe a potter of the name of Rogers, during my abſence. He, however, did not make her a good huſband, and ſhe ſeparated from him ſoon after, refuſing to cohabit with him, and even to paſs by his name, becauſe it was rumoured that he had another wife ſtill living. His

ſkill

ſkill in his trade had induced Miſs Read's parents to conſent to this match, but he was an equally bad huſband and excellent workman. Having contracted ſeveral debts, he ran away, in 1727 or 1728, to the Weſt Indies, where he died.

During my abſence, Keimer had hired a more conſiderable houſe than the one which he occupied before, and he had opened a ſhop well furniſhed with paper and other goods of a ſimilar kind. He had alſo procured an abundance of new types, and a number of workmen, among whom there was not, however, a ſingle good one; He ſeemed to be in a thriving way, and to have great employment.

Mr. Denham hired a warehouſe in Water-Street, where we diſplayed our merchandize. I was aſſiduous in buſineſs; I ſtudied book-keeping, and in a ſhort time I became exceedingly expert at it. We lodged and boarded together; he was ſincerely attached to me, and acted in every thing exactly the ſame as if he had been my father. On my ſide, I loved and reſpected him; my ſituation indeed was extremely pleaſant, but this happineſs was of very ſhort duration.

About the beginning of February, 1727, the epoch at which I entered into the 22nd year of my age, we both fell ſick. I was attacked by a pleuriſy, which nearly carried me off; I ſuffered a great deal, and gave myſelf over for loſt. It was actually a ſort of diſappointment to me, when I found myſelf convaleſcent, and I regretted that I ſhould ſooner or later, have

have the ſame diſagreeable career to run through hereafter.

I do not at preſent recollect what was the nature of the malady with which Mr. Denham was ſeized; but it was long in its continuance, and he at length ſunk beneath its preſſure. He left me a ſmall legacy in his will, as a teſtimony of his affection, and thus I was once more delivered up to my own management, in the vaſt ocean of the univerſe, for the ſtore being confided to the care of the teſtamentary legatee, I immediately received my diſmiſſion.

My brother-in-law, Captain Holmes, who happened at this time to be in Philadelphia, adviſed me to return to my firſt profeſſion, and Keimer offered me a very large ſalary, provided I would undertake the management of his printing-houſe, in order to enable him to give up all his own time and attention to the ſhop.

His wife, and her relations in London, had given me but a very indifferent idea of this man, and I did not care to have any thing to do with a perſon of his character. I accordingly ſought for employment among the merchants, but not finding any immediate vacancy, I allowed myſelf to be prevailed upon by Keimer, to reſide with him.

I found the following workmen in his printing-houſe:

Hugh Meredith, a Pennſylvanian about 35 years of age; he had been brought up as a farmer; he was honeſt, ſenſible, experienced, and was beſides fond of books.

Stephen

Stephen Potts was a young man who poſſeſſed excellent natural qualifications, far ſuperior indeed to what is commonly met with among people in his ſituation, and along with this he had much wit and great gaiety of diſpoſition; but he was rather lazy.

Keimer had hired theſe two by the week, at very moderate wages, which were to be augmented at the rate of one ſhilling every three months, according to their progreſs in their buſineſs. This future augmentation was the bait which he made uſe of in order to gain them. Meredith was to be employed at preſs-work, and Potts in book-binding, both of which branches their honeſt maſter undertook to teach them, although he himſelf was entirely ignorant of either of them.

The third was John Savage, he had not been educated to any trade whatever; Keimer had purchaſed his ſervice for four years from the captain of a veſſel, who had brought him over. He was deſtined to become a preſs-man.

George Webb was an Oxford ſcholar, whoſe ſervice he had alſo purchaſed for four years; he was intended to be a compoſitor. I ſhall ſpeak of him hereafter.

The laſt was David Harry, a country lad, whom he had taken as an apprentice.

I ſoon perceived that Keimer's intention in engaging me at ſuch high wages, and ſo far beyond what he was accuſtomed to give, was in order that I might educate and form as it were, all thoſe new and unexpenſive workmen, who were moſt of them bound to him

him by indentures, and, that as ſoon as they ſhould be ſufficiently inſtructed in their reſpective occupations, he would inſtantly diſmiſs me.

I immediately put his printing-office, which was in the utmoſt confuſion, in order; and I ſucceeded by degrees, in making his aſſiſtants attend to their buſineſs, and proceed much better than they had done before.

It was rather an extraordinary circumſtance to behold an Oxford ſcholar in the ſituation of an *indented ſervant*. He was not above eighteen years of age, and the following are the particulars of his own hiſtory, as detailed to me by himſelf:

He was born in Glouceſter, was educated at a grammar-ſchool in that city, and had diſtinguiſhed himſelf above the other ſcholars, by the ſuperior manner in which he acted his part, when they uſed to perform dramatic entertainments. He was member of a literary club in that part of the country, and had publiſhed ſome pieces of his own compoſition both in verſe and proſe, in the Glouceſter news-paper.

He ſoon after was ſent to Oxford, where he remained for about a year; but he was diſcontented with a college life, and was deſirous, above all things to ſee London, and become a comedian there. At length happening to receive fifteen guineas as the payment of his quarter's board and expences, inſtead of liquidating his debts, he left the univerſity on foot, concealed his gown in a buſh, and proceeded ſtraight forward to London.

On his arrival there, having no friend to ſuperintend and direct his conduct, he fell into bad company, ſpent all his money, and not being able to get an engagement in any of the theatres, he became reduced to the utmoſt miſery, pawned his clothes, and was actually in want of bread. As he happened one day to walk along the ſtreets half famiſhed with hunger, and not caring what was to become of him, an advertiſement was put into his hand, diſtributed by one of thoſe people called *Kidnappers*, in which immediate relief, and a ſum of money by way of bounty, was offered to all thoſe who ſhould engage to ſerve in America.

He inſtantly repaired to the place which was pointed out in the hand-bill, entered into an engagement, was received on board a veſſel, and paſſed over to America, without ever writing a ſingle line to inform his relations of what had become of him.

His vivacity and natural endowments rendered him a good companion, but he was of an indolent diſpoſition, without any foreſight, and, to the laſt degree, imprudent.

John the Iriſhman, was not long in running away.

I began to live in a very agreeable manner with the others. They all reſpected me ſo much the more, as they found Keimer incapable of inſtructing them, while they learned ſomething new from me daily. We never worked on a Saturday, becauſe it was Keimer's *Sabbath*; and thus I had two days every week, which I devoted to reading.

I alſo

I alſo increaſed the number of my acquaintance, at leaſt among well-informed people, as much as poſſible. Keimer himſelf treated me apparently with much civility and conſideration, and nothing, at that period, gave me any uneaſineſs except my debt to Vernon, which I was ſtill incapable of paying, not having as yet been able to accumulate ſo large a ſum out of my little ſavings; but he was kind enough not to demand the reimburſement of it.

Our printing-houſe was often in want of different ſorts of *letter*, and there were no letter-founders in America. I, however, was able, with ſome difficulty, to conſtruct a mould; I made uſe of the letters which we had already, as *punches*; I caſt the types in lead, by means of a clay matrix; and I thus made ſhift to ſupply the printing-houſe with whatever was wanting. True it is, that the letter was not good, but it was tolerable.

I alſo, upon occaſion, engraved a variety of ornaments; I made ink; I now and then put the ſhop in proper order; in ſhort, I became, as it were, Keimer's *factotum*.

But, however uſeful I might be, I ſoon perceived that my ſervices became daily of leſs importance, and that this happened exactly in proportion as the other workmen began to be more expert at their buſineſs; in ſhort, on paying my ſecond quarter's wages, he informed me, that he thought them too high, and that in his opinion, I ought to make ſome abatement. He alſo became leſs civil, and daily took upon him more of the tone, and the authority of a maſter. He

often pretended to have occaſion to find fault with me; he became more difficult to pleaſe, and even ſeemed ready to come to an open rupture with me.

I continued, notwithſtanding, to ſupport his ill conduct with patience, thinking that the embarraſſment of his affairs, was in part the occaſion of his bad temper. At length a very ſlight incident diſſolved our connection. Happening one day to hear a great noiſe in the neighbourhood of our houſe, I put my head out of the window in order to ſee what had occaſioned it. Keimer, who was in the ſtreet, looked up, and having obſerved me, told me in a loud and choleric tone of voice, to look to my buſineſs; he alſo added ſome reproachful expreſſions, which piqued me the more, becauſe they were delivered in public; all the neighbours, who, like myſelf, were attracted to the window, having overheard the converſation, had been witneſſes of the manner in which I was treated.

Not content with this, he came up ſtairs into the printing-office, and continued to abuſe me. Both of us waxed warm, and he gave me warning to quit his ſervice at the approaching quarter, according to previous ſtipulation, teſtifying at the ſame time great uneaſineſs at being obliged to give me ſo long a term.

In reply to this, I told him, that his regret was ſuperfluous, becauſe I was ready to leave him at that very moment. In ſhort, I ſnatched up my hat, and ſallied out of the houſe, deſiring Meredith, whom I ſaw below, to take ſome of my effects which I had left behind me, and carry them at his leiſure to my lodgings.

Meredith

Meredith accordingly called upon me that very evening, and we ſpoke a great deal concerning what I had endured.

He had conceived a great veneration for me, and was extremely ſorry that I ſhould leave the office while he reſided there. He alſo diſſuaded me from returning to my native province; for I actually began to form ſuch an idea. He reminded me that Keimer owed a ſum equal at leaſt to the value of the property he was in poſſeſſion of; that his creditors began to be clamorous; that he carried on trade in a moſt fooliſh manner, often ſelling things without any profit, in order to procure ready money, and giving credit to any perſon from mere habit, and even without keeping an exact account of it. In conſequence of this he argued, that in the end he muſt fail in buſineſs, which would afford an opening, from which I might find means to profit greatly.

To this I objected my want of capital; but he informed me in reply, that his father had conceived the higheſt opinion of me, and that in conſequence of a converſation they had lately together, he was aſſured he would advance a ſum of money to ſet us up in buſineſs, if I would but admit him into partnerſhip with me.

"The time I am bound to Keimer," ſays he, will "be out next ſpring. By that period we may have "received our preſs and our types from London. "I know that I am not a good workman, but if you "will agree to my propoſition, your knowledge in "buſineſs will be in ſome meaſure counterbalanced

" by the capital advanced by me, and we ſhall divide " the profits equally between us."

His propoſal was ſo very reaſonable, that we inſtantly ſhook hands upon it. His father too, who happened to be in town at that very time, approved of our ſcheme. He knew that I had a great influence over the mind of his ſon, for I had prevailed upon him, for ſome months paſt, to abſtain from drinking brandy, and he hoped that if we were more intimately connected together, I ſhould be able to make him give over this unhappy cuſtom altogether.

I gave his father a catalogue of the tools it would be neceſſary for us to receive from London. He carried it immediately to a merchant's, and gave him an order for procuring them. We had agreed together to keep this matter a ſecret, until their arrival, and I was in the mean time, to endeavour to procure, if poſſible, ſome employment in another printing-office; but there was no place vacant, and ſo I remained idle.

At the end of a few days, however, Keimer having the expectation of being employed to print the paper money for the State of New Jerſey, a job which required engravings, and different characters, which I alone could furniſh, and fearing leſt Bradford ſhould engage me, and conſequently procure this buſineſs, ſent me a very civil meſſage. He ſaid that old friends ought not to remain enemies, on account of a few haſty words, ſpoken in a moment of paſſion, and that he was exceedingly deſirous that I ſhould return to him once more. Meredith perſuaded me to accept of his

his invitation, and as an additional reaſon, obſerved, that it would be particularly advantageous to him, as he would thus have a better opportunity of improving himſelf in his profeſſion, by means of my daily inſtructions.

I accordingly returned, and we lived in greater harmony together than before our late ſeparation.

Keimer was lucky enough to be employed by the province of New Jerſey. In order to facilitate our operations, I conſtructed a preſs for copper-plate printing: This was the firſt that had ever been ſeen in America. I engraved a variety of *vignettes* and ornaments for the notes; Keimer and I then repaired to Burlington, where I executed the whole to the ſatisfaction of every body, and he received a ſum of money on this occaſion, which helped him to *keep his head above water*, much longer than he would otherwiſe have been able to do.

At Burlington I got acquainted with the principal perſons of the province. Several of them had been nominated by the aſſembly, in order to ſuperintend the preſs, and take care that there were no more *notes* printed than the number ordained by law. In conſequence of this, they were by turns, conſtantly with us, and whoever came according to rotation, commonly brought with him one or two friends to keep him company.

My mind was much more cultivated by reading than Keimer's; it was probably on this account that they were better pleaſed with my converſation than his. They invited me to their houſes, introduced me

to their friends, and treated me with the utmoſt attention and politeneſs, while Keimer, although the maſter, perceived himſelf a little neglected.

He was, in truth, a ſtrange animal; entirely ignorant of the common cuſtoms of life; ever ready to oppoſe himſelf with bluntneſs to received opinions; enthuſiaſtical in regard to ſome points of religion; diſguſting in his perſon; and, in fine, in addition to all this, a little bit of a rogue.

We remained near three months at Burlington, and at the end of that period, I could reckon Judge Allen, Samuel Butill, ſecretary of the province, Iſaac Pearſon, Joſeph Cooper, ſeveral gentlemen of the name of Smith, all members of the aſſembly, and Iſaac Decon, the inſpector-general, among the number of my friends.

This laſt was an able and intelligent man, who told me, that in his early youth, be began the world by digging clay for the brick-makers; he added, that he was rather old when he learned to write; that he was at firſt employed in carrying the chain for the ſurveyors, who taught him their trade, and that his induſtry had at length procured him a genteel fortune.

"I foreſee," ſaid he to me one day, "that you "will ſoon ſupplant this man (ſpeaking of Keimer) "in his profeſſion, and that you will make your "fortune by it hereafter in Philadelphia." He had not, at that time, the leaſt poſſible knowledge of my intention of ſetting up, either there, or elſewhere.

His

His friends were of great ſervice to me in the end, as I alſo was, when ever opportunity ſerved, to ſome them, and they have all ſince continued to teſtify great regard towards me.

Before I relate the circumſtances that attended my firſt entrance into buſineſs, it may, perhaps be proper to inform you, what was, at that time, the ſtate of my mind, relative to the principles of morality, that ſo you may be enabled to judge, how far they have influenced the poſterior events of my life.

My parents at an early age, had given me religious impreſſions, and I received, in my infancy, a pious education. I was brought up in the principles of the Preſbyterian religion; but ſcarce had I attained the age of fifteen, when, after having doubted of different points by turns, accordingly as I found them attacked in the different books that I peruſed, I began actually to doubt of revelation itſelf.

Some tracts againſt Deiſm happened about this time to fall into my hands; they contained, as I was told in the preface, the ſubſtance of ſeveral ſermons which had been preached in Boyle's laboratory. It ſome how happened, that they operated a quite contrary effect, to that which had been propoſed by the writer; for the arguments of the Deiſts which had been cited in order to be refuted, appeared to me to be much ſtronger than the refutation itſelf. In ſhort, I became a complete Deiſt.

My mode of reaſoning upon this ſubject, alſo perverted ſeveral other young men, particularly Collins and Ralph, but when I began afterwards to recollect,

that

that they had both of them done me a great deal of harm, without the leaſt remorſe; when I conſidered the proceedings of governor Keith, another *free thinker*, and my own conduct towards Vernon and Miſs Read, which, at times gave me great uneaſineſs, I ſuſpected that this doctrine, although it might be true, was not very uſeful. I alſo began to have a worſe opinion than before of the pamphlet I had publiſhed in London, which had the following quotation from Dryden, by way of motto:

" Whatever is is right;
" Tho' purblind man ſees but a part of the chain;
(" The neareſt link;)
" His eyes not carrying to the equal beam
" That poiſes all above."

The concluſion I drew from this was, that in conſequence of the goodneſs, the wiſdom, and infinite power of the Deity, nothing could be wrong in this world, and that neither vice nor virtue exiſted in reality, and were, in ſhort, nothing more than vain diſtinctions. I no longer looked upon this doctrine to be ſo irreproachable, as I had at firſt thought it, and I began to ſuſpect that ſome imperceptible error had inſinuated itſelf into my argument, which affected every thing that followed, as is commonly the caſe in metaphyſical reaſonings.

I at length remained fully convinced, that truth, ſincerity, and integrity, in the dealings of man with man, were of the utmoſt importance to the happineſs of mankind, and from that moment I formed the re-

ſolution, and wrote it down in my journal, to practice them during the remainder of my life.

Revelation, *as ſuch*, had not in truth, any influence upon my mind; but I was of opinion that although certain actions could not be bad, *becauſe it had prohibited them*, nor good, *becauſe it had commanded them*, that it was nevertheleſs probable, that theſe actions were prohibited, becauſe *they were bad for us*, and commanded, *becauſe they were advantageous in their own nature*, all circumſtances and things taken into conſideration. And this perſuaſion, aided by the ſuccour of Divine Providence, or ſome tutelary angel, and perhaps by circumſtances and accidental ſituations, which were favourable in themſelves, preſerved me from all immorality, or at leaſt from *groſs and voluntary* injuſtice, which my want of religion tended to render me guilty of, during this dangerous period of youth, and amidſt the difficult ſituations which I ſometimes found myſelf expoſed to among ſtrangers, and at a diſtance from the eye and the counſels of my father.

I have thought fit to ſay *voluntary*, becauſe the faults that I had hitherto committed, were in ſome reſpects *forced*, either by the inexperience of my youth or by the diſhoneſty of others.

I had conſequently the principles, and I poſſeſſed the character of ſolid probity, before my entrance into the world on my own foundation. I was well aware of this advantage, and I was reſolved to preſerve it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Our Author ſets up in Buſineſs—Some Account of the Cynic Mickle—Eſtabliſhment of a Political and Philoſophical Club—He reſolves to publiſh a News-paper—His Scheme is betrayed by a quondam Friend—He pays Vernon the Sum of Money ſo long due—Experiences new Embarraſſments—Generoſity of two of his Friends—Diſſolution of his Partnerſhip with Meredith—Some Obſervations relative to the Utility of Paper-Money—He opens a Stationer's Shop—His extraordinary Prudence, Economy, and Aſſiduity—He is at length united to Miſs Read—He plans a Public Library.

WE had not returned but a few weeks to Philadelphia, when our types, preſs, &c. &c. arrived from London. I inſtantly ſettled my accounts with Keimer, and left him with his own conſent, before he had any knowledge of my deſign.

We hired an empty houſe near the Market-Place; in order to make the rent leſs inconvenient for us (it was then let for £.24 ſterling per annum, and I have ſince known it to be let for £.70) we received Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and his family, as lodgers, who ſupported a conſiderable portion of the expence, and permitted us to board with them at a ſtipulated ſum.

Scarce had we got our types in order, and ſet up our preſs, when George Houſe, an acquaintance of mine, brought us a countryman, whom he had picked

up

up in the ſtreets wandering about in ſearch of a printer. Our money was at this time nearly exhauſted, on account of the variety of little ſums we had been under the neceſſity of expending, and the countryman's five ſhillings, which were the firſt profits of our partnerſhip, came ſo *a propos*, that I enjoyed more pleaſure from the receipt of it, than from any ſum I have ever gained ſince. The gratitude which I felt in my heart, for the friendly conduct of George Houſe upon this occaſion, rendered me infinitely more ready than I ſhould otherwiſe have been, to favour and encourage young men, in their firſt outſet in life.

In every country, there are a number of moroſe and cynical people, who are continually prognoſticating the ruin of their neighbours. There was a perſon of this deſcription, reſiding at that very time at Philadelphia. He was a man of a certain age, he poſſeſſed a conſiderable fortune, had an appearance of wiſdom, and a very grave manner of ſpeaking; his name was Samuel Mickle.

This man, whom I was entirely unacquainted with, ſtopped one day at my door, and aſked me if I was the young man who had lately ſet up a new printing houſe; on my anſwering in the affirmative, he ſaid that he was very ſorry for me, becauſe it was an hazardous enterprize, the expence of which was entirely thrown away, as Philadelphia was then actually in a ſtate of decay, all the inhabitants having either ſhut up ſhop, or being on the point of doing ſo; he added, that he was certain, from his own knowledge, that every

every thing that might induce fooliſh people to think otherwiſe, ſuch as new buildings, and the increaſed price paid for lodgings, were deceitful ſigns, which, in truth, only contributed to haſten our ruin, and he gave me ſuch a detailed account, both of the exiſting misfortunes, and of ſuch as were on the eve of taking place, that he left me almoſt entirely diſcouraged.

If I had actually known this man before my entrance into buſineſs, I ſhould, beyond all doubt, never have attempted it.

He himſelf continued to live in this *ruined place*, and to declaim in the ſame manner, refuſing, for many years to purchaſe a houſe, becauſe every thing was falling into *decay*; at length, however, I had the ſatisfaction to ſee him pay five times as much for one as if he had bought it, when he firſt commenced his lamentations.

I ought to have obſerved, that in the courſe of the preceding autumn, I had collected a number of the beſt informed men of my acquaintance, in order to form a club, which we called the *Junto*, the intention of which inſtitution was to improve our minds.

We met conſtantly every Friday evening. The laws which I myſelf drew up, obliged every member in his turn, to propoſe one or more queſtions on ſome point of morality, politics, or natural philoſophy, in order to be diſcuſſed by the company preſent; and alſo to read once every three months, an eſſay of his own compoſition, on any ſubject that ſtruck his fancy.

Our

Our debates were to be ſubmitted to the regulation of a preſident, and were never to be excited but by the ſincere deſire of diſcovering the truth, without which the pleaſure of diſputation, or the vanity ariſing from victory, was to paſs for nothing in our diſcuſſions. In ſhort, in order to prevent bickerings and quarrels, all thoſe expreſſions which might evince an obſtinate, or head-ſtrong opinion, and all direct contradictions, were prohibited under the penalty of little pecuniary fines.

The firſt members of our club were:

Joſeph Brientnall, who was employed as a copying-clerk among the lawyers. He was a middle aged man, of a good natural diſpoſition, greatly attached to his friends, very fond of poetry, reading all that he could meet with, and writing verſes paſſably well; very ingenious, and exceedingly agreeable in converſation.

Thomas Godfrey, an able mathematician, who had ſtudied this ſcience without the aſſiſtance of a maſter, and who was afterwards the inventor of what is called Hadley's Quadrant; but he knew very little out of his own ſphere, and was not ſupportable in company, always requiring, like moſt of the great mathematicians I have met with, an uncommon preciſion in every thing that was ſtated to them, and denying or diſtinguiſhing perpetually in regard to trifles; the true means of troubling anddiſturbing all converſation.

He ſoon quitted us.

Nicholas

Nicholas Scull, a ſurveyor, who ſoon after became ſurveyor general. He was fond of books and made verſes.

William Parſons, brought up to the buſineſs of a ſhoe-maker, but, who being fond of reading, had acquired a profound knowledge of the mathematicks. He ſtudied this ſcience at firſt with an eye towards aſtrology, at which he himſelf was afterwards the firſt to laugh. He alſo became ſurveyor-general.

William Maugridge, a carpenter, and a moſt excellent mechanic: In addition to this, he was a man, at once ſolid and ſenſible.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb; of whom I have before made mention.

Robert Grace, a young man of fortune, generous, lively, and witty; he was fond of ſatire, but he loved his friend ſtill more than an epigram.

And laſt of all, William Coleman, at that time clerk to a merchant, and much about my own age. He had the cooleſt and cleareſt head, the beſt heart, and was the moſt exact moraliſt, that I almoſt ever happened to meet with. He afterwards became one of our moſt reſpectable merchants, and alſo one of the provincial judges. Our friendſhip exiſted without any interruption, for more than forty years, to the very day of his death; the club laſted nearly as long.

It was actually the beſt ſchool in the province for philoſophy and politics; for our queſtions, which were given out a whole week previous to their being diſcuſſed, put us under the neceſſity of making diligent

gent inquiries concerning the different objects propoſed to be canvaſſed, in order to enable us to ſpeak more pertinently upon the ſubjects under debate.

We thus alſo acquired the habit of a more agreeable kind of converſation than we had been before accuſtomed to, every queſtion being debated according to the expreſs laws of the ſociety, and in ſuch a manner as to prevent all diſguſt.

It is to this circumſtance that we may attribute the duration of our club, of which I ſhall often have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter.

I ſhall now only mention it as one of the means on which I reckoned for the increaſe of our buſineſs, each of the members endeavouring, as much as poſſible, to get us employment. Brentnall, in particular, prevailed upon the Quakers to employ us, to print part of their hiſtory; the remainder was to be completed under the inſpection of Keimer. It was impoſſible to take much pains with the work, as we had contracted to finiſh it at a very low price. It was a folio volume printed on *pro patria* paper, with a *Cicero* character; the notes, which were exceedingly long, were in a ſmaller type. I compoſed half a ſheet per day of it, and Meredith immediately put it to preſs. It was often eleven o'clock at night, and ſometimes later, before I had finiſhed my diſtribution for next day's work; the little trifles which we did from time to time, for our friends, kept us behind-hand, but I was reſolutely determined to finiſh my taſk. Having one night impoſed my *form*, and, as I thought, finiſhed my labour, an accident occurred which

intirely diſplaced my two folio pages of *Cicero*; on this I inſtantly diſtributed them again, and recompoſed the whole, previous to my retiring to reſt.

This vigilance and induſtry, which our neighbours did not fail to perceive, began to acquire us both credit and reputation. I learned, among other things, that the merchants' club, which aſſembled every night, happening accidentally to talk about the new printing-houſe, it was the general opinion that it would not ſucceed, there being two printers (Keimer and Bradford) already eſtabliſhed in the town. But Doctor Baird, whom you and I had occaſion to ſee a great number of years after, in the place of his nativity, at St. Andrew's in Scotland, was of a contrary opinion.

"The induſtry of that Franklin (ſaid he) is in-
"finitely beyond any thing of the kind I ever knew
"in my life before. I ſee him ſtill at work every
"night when I go home from the club, and he is
"again up and at buſineſs, before his neighbours are
"out of their beds."

This circumſtance made a great impreſſion upon the reſt of the aſſembly, and in a ſhort time afterwards one of the members came and offered to furniſh us with articles in the paper line; but we were determined not as yet to embarraſs ourſelves by opening a ſhop.

It is not in order to offer up incenſe to myſelf, that I here enter ſo fully into details relative to my induſtry; it is done merely with the idea that ſuch of my deſcendants as read theſe Memoirs, may appre-

ciate

ciate the advantage of this virtue, by perceiving, in the recital of my life, the happy effects which it produced in my favour.

George Webb, having found a friend who lent him money to re-purchaſe his indentures from Keimer, came one day in order to offer himſelf to us as a workman. We could not immediately give him employment; but I fooliſhly told him, by way of ſecret, that we intended ſpeedily to publiſh a newſpaper, and that we ſhould then take him into our ſervice. My hopes of ſucceſs, which I freely communicated to him, were founded on the conſideration, that the only paper which we had at that time in Philadelphia, and which was printed by Bradford, was a paltry publication, which although miſerably conducted, and deſtitute of amuſement, yet produced him a conſiderable profit.

Webb betrayed my confidence, and inſtantly communicated my project to Keimer, who, in order to anticipate me, publiſhed the *proſpectus* of a paper, which he himſelf intended to print, and upon which Webb was to be employed.

I was provoked partly at my own indiſcretion, and partly at the unfair advantage which had been taken of it: by way of oppoſition therefore, being as yet unable to begin our intended paper, I wrote ſeveral diverting little eſſays, for Bradford's journal, under the name of the "Buſy Body," which Brentall continued for ſeveral months. I thus fixed the attention of the public upon it, and Keimer's *proſpectus*, which we turned into ridicule, was deſpiſed.

Notwithſtanding this, he actually publiſhed his paper, and after continuing it nine months, having at that time no more than ninety ſubſcribers, he offered to ſell it to me for a mere trifle. I was then at full liberty to conduct it; I therefore purchaſed the copy-right, and began to print it immediately upon my own account: In a few years afterwards it afforded me a handſome profit.

I perceive that I am now talking in the *ſingular* number, although our partnerſhip ſtill exiſted. It is, perhaps, becauſe in fact the whole enterpriſe depended entirely upon my exertion. Meredith was not a compoſitor, he was nothing more than a poor preſſman, and he but rarely abſtained from drinking ſpirits. My friends were ſorry to ſee me connected with him, but I managed matters as well as poſſible.

The firſt numbers of our paper made a far different ſenſation than any publication of the ſame kind that had yet appeared in the province, as well on account of the ſtyle, as the manner of printing. Some keen remarks which I made after my own manner, concerning the diſpute which a little before that time had taken place between governor Burnet and the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets, ſtruck perſons as ſomething above what is common, and occaſioned a great deal to be ſaid relative to the paper and its editor, ſo that in a few weeks we had a multitude of ſubſcribers. Their example was ſoon followed by many others, and our ſubſcription increaſed daily. This was one of the firſt good effects produced by my endeavours to communicate my ideas to paper. I alſo drew another

advantage

advantage from it, for the principal people in the province, perceiving me to be a man well calculated for my ſituation, thought it advantageous to themſelves to do me every ſervice, and encourage me by all means in their power.

Bradford ſtill publiſhed the motions made in the aſſembly, the laws paſſed there, and all the other public proceedings. He had printed an addreſs from the houſe of repreſentatives to the governor, in a negligent and incorrect manner. We reprinted it with accuracy and elegance, and ſent a copy of it to every member. They inſtantly perceived the difference, and this circumſtance ſeconded the influence of our well-wiſhers in ſuch a manner, that we were nominated printers to the aſſembly for the ſucceeding year.

Among my friends in that houſe, I ought not to forget one of the members, Mr. Hamilton, of whom I have made mention before, and who by this time had returned from England. He intereſted himſelf warmly on my account upon the preſent occaſion, as he did on many others afterwards, having continued his kindneſs to me to the day of his death.

Mr. Vernon about this time reminded me of my debt to him, but without preſſing me for the payment of it: I wrote a complimentary letter full of thanks in return, and beſought him to wait a little longer, which he readily complied with, and as ſoon as it was in my power I paid him the whole, both principal and intereſt, at the ſame time teſtifying the great ob-

ligations I lay under to him; ſo that this error of my life was in ſome reſpect corrected.

But another embarraſſment occurred, which I never expected to have experienced.

Meredith's father, who, according to agreement, was to have advanced the whole ſum of money neceſſary for the payment of our types, preſs, &c. &c. had only given £100 ſterling. There was as much more ſtill due to the merchant, who became impatient for his money, and dunned us continually. We indeed gave him ſecurity, but we had the melancholy proſpect before us, that if the money was not ready by the time agreed upon, a writ would be ſued out, the judgment would be put in execution, all our fine projects would evaporate, and we ſhould be intirely ruined, as the preſs and types would be ſold, perhaps at one half of the original price, by way of liquidating the debt!

In the midſt of this diſtreſs, two true friends, whoſe generous proceedings I never have, nor ever ſhall forget, while I am able to recollect any thing, came to me ſeparately, and unknown to each other, and without my having ſpoken to them on the ſubject, each of them offered to advance all the money neceſſary, in order to enable me to take the buſineſs entirely into my own hands, if it ſhould be practicable ſo to do, becauſe they did not chooſe that I ſhould remain in partnerſhip with Meredith, whom, they ſaid, they had often ſeen drunk in the ſtreets, and playing at games of chance in the ale-houſes, circumſtances

cumſtances which could not fail to be extremely diſadvantageous to our credit.

Theſe two friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace. I replied to them, that while any probability remained that the Merediths would perform that part of our agreement which they had undertaken to fulfil, I could not think of propoſing a ſeparation, as I was under a great obligation to them, for what they had already done, and what they would, doubtleſs, ſtill do for me, provided it were in their power.

While things remained in this ſtate, I ſaid one day to my partner:

"Your father is perhaps diſcontented at your entering into trade along with me, and does not chooſe to do for two, what he would do for one. If this be the caſe, tell me ſo honeſtly, and I will repay you the whole ſum advanced, and take the buſineſs into my own hands."

"No, (replies he,) my father has actually been diſappointed in his hopes; he is unable to pay the remainder of the money, and I wiſh not to make him uneaſy on the ſubject. I perceive at length, that I myſelf am not in the leaſt qualified for being a printer: I was brought up as a farmer, and it was a fooliſh thing in me to come to town, and bind myſelf, at thirty years of age, as an apprentice to a new buſineſs. Several of my old acquaintances are about to form an eſtabliſhment in North Carolina, where the land is extremely fertile and productive. I am tempted to go with

"them, and resume my former occupation. You, "doubtless, may find friends to assist you: If you "will, therefore, undertake to pay the debts con- "tracted by the partnership, restore to my father the "hundred pounds he has advanced, liquidate my own "little trifling debts, and give me thirty pounds and a "new saddle, I will resign up my claim to every thing, "and leave the whole business intirely to yourself."

I instantly accepted this proposition without the least hesitation. The terms were immediately committed to writing, and signed and sealed without any delay. I agreed to every thing he required, and he soon after set off for South Carolina, from whence in the course of the next year he sent me two long letters, containing the best accounts that had hitherto appeared, relative to that country, in regard to the climate, soil, agriculture, &c. &c.; for he was exceedingly expert in all those matters. I published this correspondence in my newspaper, and it was read with the utmost satisfaction.

As soon as he was gone, I addressed myself to my two friends, and not wishing to give one a disobliging preference over the other, I accepted of each of them one half the sum he had offered me; this was absolutely necessary for the settlement of my affairs.

I then paid the debts due by the partnership, and continued to carry on business in my own name, taking care to inform the public, by means of an advertisement, that the connexion was dissolved. I think that this was either in or about the year 1729.

About

About the ſame epoch, the people began to be clamorous for a new emiſſion of paper money, which had never been iſſued in the province to a greater amount than £15,000 ſterling, and the notes were become exceedingly ſcarce.

The rich inhabitants, prepoſſeſſed againſt all paper of this kind, for fear leſt the value of money ſhould be lowered, as had been done in New-England, to the prejudice of all thoſe who were creditors, oppoſed themſelves to this demand.

We had often diſcuſſed the queſtion in our *Junto*, where I had been always on the ſide that patroniſed the new emiſſion, being fully perſuaded that the firſt ſmall ſum, iſſued in 1723, had done much good in the province, by favouring commerce, induſtry, and population, as I perceived all the houſes inhabited, and many more were then building; whereas I recollected very well, when I wandered, for the firſt time, along the ſtreets of Philadelphia, eating my loaf, and looking around me, that I had ſeen moſt of the houſes in Wallnut-Street, and Second-Street, and Fourth-Street, as well as a great number of others in Cheſnut-Street, and elſewhere, with bills upon them; a circumſtance which made me then think that the inhabitants of Philadelphia would abandon it, one after the other.

Our frequent debates had put me ſo fully in poſſeſſion of this ſubject, that I wrote and publiſhed an anonymous pamphlet, on "The Nature and Neceſſity "of Paper Money." It was well received by the public in general, but it greatly diſpleaſed the rich, becauſe

becauſe it increaſed and fortified the clamours of thoſe who were in favour of a new creation of paper money. But being utterly deſtitute of a writer capable of making any reply, their oppoſition began to be mollified, and the majority of the aſſembly being in favour of the project, a law ſoon after paſſed for this purpoſe.

My numerous friends in that houſe, fully perſuaded that I had been very ſerviceable upon this occaſion, reſolved to make me ſome little recompenſe by employing me to print the paper money: It was a lucrative job, and was of prodigious ſervice to me. This was another advantage that I derived from a facility in managing my pen.

Time and experience ſo evidently demonſtrated the utility and advantage of paper money, that it never afterwards experienced much oppoſition, ſo that it ſoon amounted to £55,000 ſterling, and in 1739 to £80,000 ſterling. Since that epoch it increaſed, during the late war, to £350,000 ſterling; commerce, new buildings, and inhabitants continually increaſing in the interval: I am however perſuaded, that there are certain limits, beyond which the emiſſion of paper money may become prejudicial.

I obtained ſoon after, by means of my friend Hamilton, the impreſſion of the paper money belonging to Newcaſtle, another profitable piece of buſineſs, as I then thought it, little things always appearing great to thoſe whoſe fortunes are moderate; and this was really uncommonly advantageous, becauſe it was very encouraging to me. He alſo procured me the privilege

vilege of printing the laws and proceedings of that aſſembly, and this buſineſs conſtantly continued to be done by me, while I exerciſed the profeſſion of a printer.

I afterwards opened a little ſhop for the ſale of paper and ſtationary. I kept *blanks* of all kinds, and they were by far the moſt correct that had ever appeared among us; I was aſſiſted in this operation by my friend Brentnall. I alſo ſold parchment, paſteboard, books, &c. &c.

A perſon of the name of Witemach, whom I had known in London, and who was a moſt excellent compoſitor, offered himſelf to me about this time; I immediately employed him, and he worked conſtantly and diligently with me. I alſo took the ſon of Aquila Roſe, as an apprentice.

I then began little by little to pay off the debt which I had contracted for my utenſils, and on purpoſe to ſubſtantiate my credit as a tradeſman, I took care not only to be *really* induſtrious and frugal, but even to avoid the appearance of the contrary.

I was clothed with great ſimplicity, and was never ſeen in any place of public amuſement. I never went with parties of pleaſure either to fiſh or to hunt. True indeed, a favourite book would now and then debauch me from my buſineſs, but this was but ſeldom the caſe; and when it ſo occurred, it was in *private*, and *without giving ſcandal*. In order alſo to ſhew that I was not above my profeſſion, I ſometimes carried home the paper which I had bought from the merchants, in a wheel-barrow, which I rolled through the ſtreets before me.

I thus

I thus begun to be generally known as an induſtrious young man, and one very exact in all his payments; the merchants who imported paper, ſolicited my cuſtom; others came and made me the firſt offer of books, ſo that my little buſineſs went on increaſing wonderfully.

In the mean time, Keimer's trade and credit began daily to decline, and he was at length obliged to ſell off his goods in order to ſatisfy his creditors. After this he repaired to Barbadoes, where he lived for ſome time in great poverty.

His former apprentice, David Harry, whom I had inſtructed during my reſidence with Keimer, having purchaſed his materials, ſet up in his place. I was at firſt afraid that I ſhould find a powerful rival in David, becauſe he belonged to an opulent and reſpectable family. In conſequence of this idea, I propoſed to him to enter into partnerſhip together; this, very luckily for me, he rejected with great haughtineſs.

He was very proud and lofty in his manners, and talked and acted as if he had been a lord; he lived alſo at a conſiderable expence, and took a great deal of pleaſure abroad. At length he began to run in debt and to neglect his buſineſs, and in conſequence of this, *his buſineſs left him*. Perceiving in a ſhort time, that he could procure no more employment in this country, he followed Keimer to Barbadoes, carrying his printing tools along with him. On his arrival in that iſland, the apprentice employed his *quondam* maſter as a journeyman. They often diſputed and quarrelled with each other, and Harry, who once more

more fell behind-hand, was at length obliged to ſell his printing preſs and types, and return to his former occupation as a farmer, in Pennſylvania. The perſon who purchaſed them from him, employed Keimer to work for him, but he died a few years after.

I had now no other competitor except Bradford, who being very opulent, contented himſelf with a ſmall ſhare of buſineſs, and was not in the leaſt deſirous of extending his trade. However, as he had the poſt-office, it was imagined that he was in a better ſituation to procure intelligence than I. His newſpaper alſo poſſeſſed the reputation of enjoying a more extenſive circulation than mine, and in conſequence of this, he received a far greater number of advertiſements; this circumſtance was equally profitable for him and diſadvantageous to me.

I diſtributed my newſpapers regularly by means of the poſt; but the public was of a contrary opinion, becauſe they knew that I could not accompliſh this by any other means than that of corrupting the poſt-boys, who conſequently could not take charge of them but by ſtealth, Bradford being envious enough to prohibit them. This mode of proceeding made me exceedingly angry, and I looked upon it to be ſo ſcandalous, that when in the courſe of a few years I found myſelf in his place, I was exceedingly cautious not to imitate him.

I had continued until now to board with Godfrey, who, with his wife and children, ſtill occupied a part of my houſe, and half my ſhop, which was very ſerviceable to him in his buſineſs as a glazier; it muſt

be

be obſerved, however, that he worked but very ſeldom, being conſtantly abſorbed in his mathematical purſuits.

Mrs. Godfrey about this time took it into her head to marry me to the daughter of one of her relations. She was ſtudious to find out opportunities of leaving us together, until ſhe perceived that I was really *ſmitten* with her couſin, a circumſtance not very difficult to be atchieved, as ſhe had great perſonal merit.

The parents encouraged my addreſſes, by inviting me frequently to ſupper, until they at length thought that it was time to come to an explanation. Mrs. Godfrey undertook to negotiate this buſineſs, and to bring the match between us to a concluſion.

I informed her that I expected to receive a ſum of money along with the young woman, ſufficient to enable me to liquidate the remainder of my debt for my printing tools. I believe that it did not then exceed the ſum of £100 ſterling. She returned me for anſwer, that her parents had not ſuch a large ſum at their command. I obſerved in reply, that they might borrow it any where upon the ſecurity of their houſe. At the end of a few days a meſſage was brought me, that they did not approve of the alliance, and that having conſulted Bradford, they had learned from him that the trade of a printer was far from being lucrative; that his types would be ſoon worn out, and that he would then be in want of others; that Keimer and David Harry had failed one after

the

the other, and that I ſhould, in all human probability, follow their example.

In conſequence of this, they forbad me the houſe, and ſhut up their daughter. I know not rightly, whether this proceeded from a change of opinion, or ſolely from an artifice, ariſing from the ſuppoſition that we were too far engaged with each other to deſiſt, and that, in conſequence, we ſhould endeavour to be united together by means of a clandeſtine marriage, which would ſet them entirely at liberty, either to give or refuſe their conſent, as they ſhould judge neceſſary.

Suſpecting this to be their motive, I became piqued at their conduct, and never afterwards went near them.

Mrs. Godfrey told me ſome time after, that they entertained the moſt favourable diſpoſitions in regard to me, and that they would enter anew into a treaty of marriage, but I declared that I was abſolutely determined to have nothing more to do with the family.

The Godfreys having teſtified much reſentment againſt me upon this occaſion, we began to diſagree, and at length found it inconvenient to live in the ſame houſe together; they therefore changed the place of their abode, leaving me the premiſes entirely to myſelf.

I reſolved from that moment never more to let lodgings.

This affair having turned my thoughts towards marriage, I began to look around me, and make

overtures in other places, but I ſoon found that as a printer's was in general thought to be a very poor trade, I muſt not expect to get any money with a wife, at leaſt if I wiſhed her to poſſeſs any of the good qualities that could alone make a helpmate deſirable.

In the mean time, that paſſion of youth, which is ſo very difficult to govern, often drew me into intrigues with low and looſe women, who happened to fall in my way, ſo that this kind of life was not without inconvenience and expence, beſides the perpetual riſk of ruining my health, by acquiring ſome terrible diſorder, which I dreaded above all other things in the world. I was however happy enough to eſcape from this calamity.

I had alway kept up a friendly connection and intercourſe with Miſs Read's family, both as neighbours and old acquaintances. Her parents had entertained a regard for me, from the moment that I firſt lodged in their houſe. I was often invited to viſit them, they conſulted me upon all their affairs, and I was happy enough to be ſometimes ſerviceable to them.

I was affected with the unfortunate ſituation of their daughter, who had become melancholy, was ſeldom ſeen to ſmile, and was attached to ſolitude.

I looked upon my wildneſs and inconſtancy during my ſtay in London, as the principal cauſe of her misfortunes, although her mother had candour enough to attribute the fault to herſelf rather than to me, becauſe ſhe had not only prevented our marriage before

my

my departure, but had alſo prevailed upon her daughter to marry another perſon in my abſence.

Our former mutual affection began once more to revive in our hearts; but there were many obſtacles to our union. Her marriage indeed was looked upon as illegal and invalid, her huſband, as it was rumoured, having a former wife, ſtill living in England; but it was extremely difficult to have legal proof of this at ſo great a diſtance; and although it was reported every where that he himſelf was dead, yet we had not the leaſt certainty of the fact, and even if it had been certified to us, he had left a great number of debts, for the payment of which his ſucceſſor might have been troubled.

Notwithſtanding all theſe difficulties, we were determined to be united to each other, and I accordingly eſpouſed her on the firſt of September 1730.

None of the inconveniences which we had foreſeen ever occurred; ſhe proved a good and faithful companion to me, and aſſiſted me greatly in the management of my ſhop.

We were exceedingly proſperous together, and we always endeavoured to render one another happy; thus I corrected, as well as I was able, this great error of my youth.

Our club did not as yet meet at a tavern. We aſſembled at Mr. Grace's, who had fitted up part of his houſe expreſsly for this purpoſe.

One of the members happened to obſerve, that as our books were often quoted as authorities relative to the queſtions propoſed, it would be the

beſt mode to collect them in the place where we were accuſtomed to meet, in order that they might be occaſionally conſulted, and that in thus forming one common library out of our private collections, each of us might enjoy the advantage of making uſe of the books of the other members, which would be nearly as convenient as if one perſon poſſeſſed the whole.

This idea was inſtantly adopted and carried into execution, and we all depoſited what books we could readily ſpare at the bottom of the hall. They were not, however, ſo numerous as we expected; and although we made great uſe of them from time to time, ſome inconveniencies having at length ariſen from want of care and attention, it was determined that each perſon ſhould take home his own books again.

About this period I formed a plan for eſtabliſhing a circulating library. I drew up the *proſpectus*, and put the conditions into a regular and legal form by the aſſiſtance of our famous lawyer Brockden, and my project ſucceeded to admiration, as will be ſeen hereafter.

[*Here ends that Part of the Life of the late* BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, *LL. D. originally written by himſelf.*]

THE

LIFE

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Franklin begins to diſtinguiſh himſelf as Conductor of the Pennſylvania Gazette—He becomes acquainted with Mr. Whitefield—Eſtabliſhment of the Philoſophical Society of America—Experiments in Electricity—Diſcovery tending to demonſtrate the Identity of Lightning and the Electric Fluid—Electric Kite—Metallic Conductors—Mode of preſerving Houſes from the deſtructive Effects of Lightning—Advice to thoſe unacquainted with the Nature of the Electric Fluid.

WE have already beheld the author of theſe memoirs, riſing from obſcurity in ſpite of every obſtacle, and by means of his own prudence and induſtry, ſtruggling into wealth and reputation.

Hitherto he was only known as an active and intelligent young man, and was conſpicuous for little elſe except his diligence and punctuality. But ſoon after his marriage with Miſs Read he became proprietor of the "Pennſylvania Gazette," and in a ſhort

time exhibited ſuch an extent of capacity, as the editor of it, that he acquired a conſiderable portion of celebrity. This circumſtance procured him a number of valuable friends, among whom was the Rev. George Whitefield, who, although then a very young man, diſplayed a wonderful degree of eloquence in his diſcourſes, and poſſeſſed the rare and extraordinary talent of influencing the paſſions, captivating the hearts, and amending the morals of the multitude.

At that very period he was occupied in preaching his doctrines throughout North-America, and his ſucceſs in ſo important a miſſion was unexampled. Having compoſed a volume of ſermons, for the uſe of the ſectariſts of his own perſuaſion, who were exceedingly numerous, he employed his friend Mr. Franklin to print them for him; and the extraordinary ſucceſs of this work tended not a little to extend the trade and connexions of the latter.

Although our author was uncommonly aſſiduous, both in his profeſſion as a printer and in his buſineſs as a bookſeller, yet he found means to conſecrate a few hours of his time to the purſuit of his favourite ſtudy, which was natural philoſophy.

A number of perſons, eminent for their abilities, having determined, in 1743, to form themſelves into a ſociety for the propagation of knowledge, he was unanimouſly appointed to draw up the plan of the inſtitution. This aſſociation, afterwards ſo celebrated under the name of the "Philoſophical Society of "America,"

"America," is ſtill in exiſtence, and reckons among its members a number of celebrated men.

Within a few years after the eſtabliſhment of this ſociety, the number of its members increaſed ſo conſiderably, that it was judged proper to divide them into the following ſix committees:

I. Natural Philoſophy, Mathematics, Optics, Aſtronomy, and Geography.

II. Medicine, Chemiſtry, and Anatomy.

III. Natural Hiſtory and Botany.

IV. Commerce and Navigation.

V. Mechanics and Architecture; and,

VI. Rural Œconomy, and the Amelioration of Waſte Lands.

A proſpectus of the plan was circulated over the continent, and the learned of all countries were invited to an amicable correſpondence.

Theſe meaſures were attended with the moſt ample ſucceſs, and this inſtitution began in a ſhort time to aſſume a very reſpectable appearance.

Accuſtomed to ſee and examine every thing with his own eyes, to deduct conſequences from the *phenomena* which he obſerved, and never blindly to follow the opinions of other men; Franklin ſoon acquired a vigorous judgment, a prodigious fund of knowledge, and a manner of reaſoning at once preciſe, clear, and convincing.

Amidſt a variety of commercial concerns, he found leiſure occaſionally to indulge his genius in philoſophical ſpeculations. Among theſe, electricity, the leaſt cultivated of all the branches of natural know-

ledge, more eſpecially engaged his attention; and he communicated his diſcoveries in that ſcience between the years 1747 and 1754, to Peter Collinſon, Eſq. of London, a fellow of the Royal Society.

Theſe letters were afterwards publiſhed, and nothing written on the ſubject of electricity was ever more generally read and admired, not in Great-Britain and America only, but in all parts of Europe.

The Engliſh were rather tardy in acknowledging the merits of this great man, but foreign countries did ample juſtice to his genius, and even gave the name of the Franklinian Syſtem to his diſcoveries. In a word, his experiments and obſervations on this ſubject bid fair to be handed down to poſterity, as the true principles of electricity, in the ſame manner as the Newtonian Philoſophy is acknowledged to be the true ſyſtem of nature in general.

The greateſt diſcovery which Dr. Franklin made concerning electricity, and which has been of the moſt practical uſe to mankind, is that of the perfect ſimilarity or rather *ſameneſs* between electrical fire and lightning. He begins his account of this ſimilarity, by cautioning his readers againſt being ſtaggered at the great difference of the effects, in point of *degree*, ſince that can be no argument of any diſparity in their nature. "It is no wonder," ſays he, "if the effects of the "one ſhould be much greater than thoſe of the "other; for if two electrified gun-barrels will ſtrike at "two inches diſtance, and make a loud report, at "how great a diſtance will 10,000 acres of electric

"cloud

" cloud ſtrike and give its fire, and how loud muſt " be that report!"

Having diſcovered that metallic bars pointed towards the end, poſſeſſed the power of attracting the electric matter, at a great diſtance, and became in their turn electrified by their communication with the clouds, he communicated his ideas on this ſubject to the public, and a number of theſe inſulated and pointed rods were erected in different parts of England and France. The firſt of theſe machines viſited by the celeſtial fluid, was an iron bar forty feet in length, placed at the top of his ſummer-houſe, at Merly-la-ville, by M. Dalibard; this was electrified during the ſpace of a whole hour, on the 10th of May 1752.

After having publiſhed the mode of verifying his hypotheſis concerning the identity of electricity and lightning, Franklin determined to erect a pyramid at Philadelphia, in order to perform his experiments.

Recollecting at length, that a kite would have a more ſpeedy and eaſy acceſs to the regions of thunder, than any building elevated by human induſtry, he determined to carry this idea into practice. He accordingly adjuſted a ſilk handkerchief to two ſticks placed croſs-wiſe. At the approach of the firſt ſtorm he repaired to a field where there was an out-houſe conveniently ſituated for his experiment; and in order to obviate the ridicule that but too commonly accompanies unſucceſsful attempts for the promotion of the ſciences, he took care to communicate his in-

tentions to no one but his ſon, whoſe aſſiſtance was abſolutely neceſſary upon this occaſion.

Having launched his kite into the air, with a pointed wire fixed to the end of it, he ſoon ſucceeded ſo far as to elevate it to the proper height. It was a long time before he diſcovered the leaſt appearance of electricity. A denſe black cloud had already paſſed over his head without any effect whatever, and he began actually to deſpair of ſucceſs, when happening to look with more than ordinary attention, he at length perceived a lambent flame to ſtream along the hempen cord. The lightning (for it was actually ſuch!) deſcended along the ſtring, and was received by an iron key tied to the extremity of it, while this was connected with his hand by means of a piece of ſilken cord.

What muſt have been his joy, when preſenting his knuckles to the key at the end of the hempen ſtring, he felt an electric ſhock, and found out that his diſcovery was complete!

He now clearly perceived the electric ſparks; more followed in ſucceſſion, and when the ſtring became humid by means of the rain, it conducted the electric fluid with ſtill greater freedom, ſo that it would ſtream out plentifully from the key, at the approach of a perſon's finger. At this key he charged phials, and from electric fire thus obtained, kindled ſpirits, and performed all other electrical experiments which are uſually exhibited by means of an excited globe or tube.

This memorable and indeed wonderful experiment took place in June 1752, one month after his theory had been actually verified in France, but before he

he could have poſſibly received any notice of its ſucceſs.

Having ſucceeded ſo completely with his electrical kite, Mr. Franklin determined to perſevere in his diſcoveries. He accordingly erected an inſulated iron rod, on purpoſe to draw the lightning into his houſe, to make experiments whenever there ſhould be a conſiderable quantity of it in the atmoſphere; and, that he might not loſe any opportunity of that nature, he connected two bells with his apparatus, which gave him notice by their ringing, whenever his rod was electrified.

But this diſcovery, although it ſeemed to the ignorant and ſuperficial to be only a matter of curioſity and ſurpriſe, was attended with conſequences highly beneficial to the human race. The grand practical uſe which our author converted it to, was, to prevent buildings from being damaged by lightning. This he accompliſhed by fixing a metallic rod higher than any part of the edifice, and contriving it in ſuch a manner as to communicate with the earth, or rather with the neareſt water. The lightning was ſure to ſeize upon the rod, preferably to any other part of the building, and that dangerous element, inſtead of committing its uſual deſtruction, was harmleſsly brought in contact with the ground, without doing any harm whatever.

His letters on electricity having been publiſhed in the philoſophical tranſactions of the Royal Society, his fame continued to augment daily, and the univerſity of Oxford ſoon after paid a juſt tribute to his talents,

talents, by conferring upon him the honorary title of Doctor of Laws, in the month of April 1762. At this period he had arrived at the zenith of his philoſophical glory. The moſt diſtinguiſhed men of the age began now to cultivate his friendſhip and to revere his name.

The letters of Dr. Franklin abound with a variety of miſcellaneous obſervations, highly important in their nature, as they tend to preſerve the lives of men from the ravages of an element that has heretofore been conſidered as one of the ſcourges of humanity. The following paſſage will ſerve as a leſſon to thoſe perſons unacquainted with the nature of the electrical fluid, who are accuſtomed, whenever they hear thunder, to take refuge either beneath trees, or under the ſhelter of lofty buildings:

"When a tempeſt," ſays the Doctor, "paſſes over "a country, high mountains, tall trees, elevated "towers, pyramids, maſts of ſhips, chimnies, and "in general all kinds of eminences, attract the "electric matter, and it is upon ſuch objects as "theſe that the clouds diſcharge themſelves. It is "extremely dangerous for any perſon to ſhelter "himſelf under a tree during a ſtorm; a great num-"ber of men and animals have been killed in this "manner. It is much more ſafe to remain in the "open field; and this for another reaſon: While the "clothes are drenched with rain, if a flaſh of light-"ning, darting downwards towards the earth, ſhould "happen to come in contact with the head of the "paſſenger, the fluid would be conducted all along the

" ſurface of the body, by means of the wet. Thus " we have often ſeen, that a half-drowned rat cannot " be killed by the exploſion of a bottle of electric " matter, whereas a rat whoſe ſkin is perfectly dry, " is inſtantly put to death.

" Theſe facts are proved by a multitude of ex- " amples: I ſhall only mention two. The firſt oc- " curred ſome years ſince at Lancaſter, in the pro- " vince of Pennſylvania, in the manner I am now " about to recount.

" Three children of that town, all of whom were " nearly thirteen years of age, went into the country " in the morning of the 24th of July, in order to " gather cherries. As they returned, about four " o'clock in the afternoon, they were overtaken by " a ſhower of rain, and although already wet, they " took refuge beneath a large oak, which they per- " ceived in the midſt of the highway, and which was " about forty yards diſtant from any other tree " whatever.

" One of the children leaned againſt this oak, in " ſuch a manner that his head and part of his left " ſide touched the trunk. The other two ſat them- " ſelves down at a certain diſtance, beneath the " ſhelter of one of its long and buſhy branches. Se- " veral ſucceſſive claps of thunder were now heard " in a weſterly direction; the exploſions become " louder and more frequent; at length the lightning " envelopes the tree, inſtantly kills the boy who was " ſitting againſt its trunk, and alſo a dog that lay " between his feet, and overturns the two others,

" who

" who remain for ſome minutes entirely motion-
" leſs, and without the uſe of their ſpeech. At length
" one of them acquires ſufficient ſtrength to riſe,
" but he ſeems ſtunned and enfeebled, and reels
" backwards and forwards like a drunken perſon.

" As ſoon as he was able to reflect on the cauſe
" of this accident, he ſearches after his companions,
" and perceiving that the one near him ſtill evinced
" ſome ſymptoms of life, he attempts to raiſe him
" up; not ſucceeding in this, he proceeds towards
" the other, whom he finds exactly in the ſame poſture
" as when alive, except that his body was incurv-
" ated by means of the electrical ſhock which had
" firſt ſtruck him on the head. His eyes alſo were
" open and immoveable, and all his joints ſtiff, as if
" they had been intirely deprived of articulation.

" Scarcely recovered from his own fright, and
" ſtill more alarmed at this ſpectacle, the child ran
" as faſt as poſſible to the houſe of a perſon of the
" name of John Stonner, to whom he recounted this
" unlucky accident.

" The two ſurviving children were immediately
" put to bed, and recovered ſoon afterwards. I my-
" ſelf, accompanied by ſome friends, went to ſee
" them. They were extremely ſenſible for their
" years, and replied to all our queſtions in a very
" ſatisfactory manner. Having aſked them if they
" heard any noiſe at the moment they felt themſelves
" ſtruck, 'we heard a noiſe,' ſaid they, 'as if
" a number of cannon had been fired all at once;'
" as to the ſenſation, they obſerved, 'that it ap-

" peared as if a large bundle of lighted wood had " fallen upon them, and enveloped them in its flame.'

" After examining the bodies and clothes of theſe " poor children, and conſidering what an enormous " volume of the fluid they had been expoſed to, we " were not able to conceive how it had been poſſible " for them to eſcape. The only manner of account- " ing for this *phenomenon*, (Divine Providence apart,) " is to ſuppoſe, that having been wet by the rain, " previous to their ſitting under the tree, their " clothes had ſerved as conductors to a great part of " the electric fluid.

" The ſecond inſtance took place at Savannah, in " Georgia, in the month of July 1773. In a veſſel " deſtined for the Bahamas, and moored along-ſide of " the Key were twelve horſes. The captain had cleared " out at the cuſtom-houſe, and was about to ſet ſail, " when all of a ſudden a terrible ſtorm came on, as is " often the caſe there at that ſeaſon of the year. " The lightning ſtruck the maſt of the ſhip, and the " maſt conducted it to the horſes, of whom ten were " inſtantly killed. The two which eſcaped had juſt " come on board, and had but a few minutes before " been bathed in the river Savannah, a circumſtance " which had probably ſaved their lives."

Notwithſtanding the accidents occaſioned by lightning were very common, and generally very alarming, in America, and the utility of the metallic conductors was univerſally acknowledged, yet but few houſes were furniſhed with them on the new continent; nay, ſeveral ſectariſts in Pennſylvania condemned the uſe

of them, ſaying, that it was "raſhneſs, and a want "of confidence in the firſt great Cauſe." Notwithſtanding this, theſe people, ſo very full of *confidence*, never rejected the aſſiſtance of medicine, and were not afraid of being let blood, or of applying remedies to the various diſorders with which they might happen to be afflicted.

It was thus that Franklin employed the leiſure part of his life, in philoſophical reſearches; in founding ſocieties; propagating knowledge; and in communicating a multitude of inventions uſeful to mankind. We ſhall ſoon behold him attaching himſelf to political inveſtigation, bending his great and comprehenſive talents to the ſtudy of government, repreſſing the tyranny of one nation, and teaching another to ſoar at liberty and independence!

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Our Author begins to be conſulted upon Public Affairs—Letters to Governor Shirley—He propoſes an Union between England and her Colonies—He aſſiſts the Britiſh Government during the War with France, and takes the Field in Perſon againſt the Enemy—His Influence on the Negotiations that were terminated by the Peace of Paris—He was forced, as well as the reſt of his Countrymen, into the Scheme of Independence—The Succeſs of the American Arms favourable perhaps to Britiſh Liberty.

THE abilities of Dr. Franklin began now to be acknowledged by his own countrymen, and his judgment, penetration, and candour, as well as his readineſs to ſuggeſt and carry into execution various ſchemes of public utility, deſervedly endeared him to the inhabitants of the colonies. In the year 1754, when the French were making encroachments on the back ſettlements of North America, the following plan was propoſed by government: "That the go-
"vernors of all the colonies, attended by one or
"two members of their reſpective councils, ſhould
"aſſemble, and concert meaſures for the defence of
"the whole, erect forts where they judged proper,
"and raiſe what troops they thought neceſſary,
"with power to draw on the Engliſh treaſury for
"the ſums that might be wanted, and the treaſury
"to be reimburſed by a tax laid on the colonies by
"an act of parliament."

Dr.

Dr. Franklin, who was conſulted on this occaſion, communicated his opinions with great candour and liberality, and evinced, at this early period, a determined oppoſition to a project, which ſeems to have been the foundation of thoſe future ſchemes that brought on the late horrible and deſtructive war. His letters are ſo intereſting, and indeed ſo very prophetical of what would happen, in conſequence of taxing the colonies without their conſent, that we are happy in having it in our power to communicate them to the reader.

LET-

LETTERS

FROM

DR. FRANKLIN TO GOVERNOR SHIRLEY.

LETTER I.

SIR, *Tuesday Morning.*

I RETURN you the loose sheets of the plan, with thanks to your Excellency for communicating them.

I apprehend, that excluding the people of the colonies from all share in the choice of the grand council, will give extreme dissatisfaction, as well as the taxing them by act of parliament, where they have no representation.

It is very possible that this general government might be as well and faithfully administered without the people as with them; but when heavy burdens are to be laid upon them, it has been found useful to make it, as much as possible, their own act; for they bear better, when they have, or think they have, some share in the direction; and when any public measures are generally grievous, or even distasteful to the people, the wheels of government move more heavily.

I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER II.

SIR, *Wedneſday Morning.*

I MENTIONED it yeſterday to your Excellency as my opinion, that excluding the people of the colonies from all ſhare in the choice of the grand council, would probably give extreme diſſatisfaction, as well as the taxing them by act of parliament, where they have no repreſentation. In matters of general concern to the people, and eſpecially where burdens are to be laid upon them, it is of uſe to conſider, as well what they will be apt to think and ſay, as what they ought to think: I ſhall therefore, as your Excellency requires it of me, briefly mention what of either kind occurs to me on this occaſion.

Firſt, They will ſay, and perhaps with juſtice, the body of the people in the colonies are as loyal, and as firmly attached to the preſent conſtitution and reigning family, as any ſubjects in the king's dominions.

That there is no reaſon to doubt the readineſs and willingneſs of the repreſentatives they may chuſe, to grant ſuch ſums for the defence of the country, as ſhall be judged neceſſary, ſo far as their abilities will allow.

That the people in the colonies who are to feel the immediate miſchiefs of invaſion and conqueſt by an enemy, in the loſs of their eſtates, lives, and liberties, are likely to be better judges of the quantity of forces neceſſary

neceſſary to be raiſed and maintained, forts to be built and ſupported, and of their own abilities to bear the expence, than the parliament of England at ſo great a diſtance.

That governors often come to colonies merely to make fortunes, with which they intend to return to Britain; are not always men of the beſt abilities or integrity; have many of them no eſtates here, nor any natural connections with us that ſhould make them heartily concerned for our welfare; and might poſſibly be fond of raiſing and keeping up more forces than neceſſary, from the profits accruing to themſelves, and to make proviſion for their friends and dependents.

That the counſellors in moſt of the colonies, being appointed by the crown, on the recommendation of governors, are often (N. B.) of ſmall eſtates, frequently dependent on the governors for offices, and therefore too much under influence.

That there is therefore great reaſon to be jealous of a power in ſuch governors and councils to raiſe ſuch ſums as they ſhall judge neceſſary, by drafts on the lords of the treaſury, to be afterwards laid on the colonies by act of parliament, and paid by the people here; ſince they might abuſe it, by projecting uſeleſs expeditions, haraſſing the people, and taking them from their labour to execute ſuch projects, merely to create offices and employments, gratify their dependents, and divide the profits.

That the parliament of England is at a great diſtance, ſubject to be miſinformed and miſled by ſuch

governors and councils, whoſe united intereſt might probably ſecure them againſt the effect of any complaint from hence.

That it is ſuppoſed an undoubted right of Engliſhmen, not to be taxed but by their own conſent, given through their repreſentatives.

That the colonies have no repreſentatives in parliament.

That to propoſe taxing them by parliament, and refuſe them the liberty of chuſing a repreſentative council, to meet in the colonies, and conſider and judge of the neceſſity of any general tax, and the *quantum*, ſhews a ſuſpicion of their loyalty to the crown, or of their regard for their country, or of their common ſenſe and underſtanding, which they have not deſerved.

That compelling the colonies to pay money without their conſent, would be rather like raiſing contributions in an enemy's country, than taxing of Engliſhmen for their own public benefit.

That it would be treating them as a conquered people, and not as true Britiſh ſubjects.

That a tax laid by the repreſentatives of the colonies might be eaſily leſſened; but being once laid by parliament under the influence of the repreſentations made by governors, would probably be kept up, and continued for the benefit of the governors, to the grievous burthen and diſcontent of the colonies, and prevention of their growth and increaſe.

That a power in governors, to march the inhabitants from one end of the Britiſh and French colonies

to

to the other, being a country at leaſt 1500 miles long, without the approbation or conſent of the repreſentatives firſt obtained to ſuch expeditions, might be grievous and ruinous to the people, and would put them upon a footing with the ſubjects of France in Canada, that now groans under ſuch oppreſſion from their governors, who, for two years paſt, have haraſſed them with long and deſtructive marches to the Ohio.

That if the colonies in a body, may be well governed by the governors and councils appointed by the crown, without repreſentatives, particular colonies may be as well, or better, ſo governed; a tax may be laid upon them all by act of parliament for ſupport of government; and their aſſemblies may be diſmiſſed as an uſeleſs part of the conſtitution.

That the powers propoſed by the Albany plan of union to be veſted in a grand council repreſentative of the people, even with regard to military matters, are not ſo great as thoſe of the colonies of Rhode-Iſland and Connecticut are entruſted with by their charters, and have never abuſed; for, by this plan, the preſident general is appointed by the crown, and controuls all by his negative; but in thoſe governments the people chuſe the governor, and yet allow him no negative.

That the Britiſh colonies bordering on the French are properly frontiers of the Britiſh empire; and the frontiers of an empire are properly defended at the joint expence of the body of the people in ſuch empire: It would now be thought hard, by act of parlia-

ment to oblige the cinque-ports or ſea-coaſt of Britain to maintain the whole navy, becauſe they are more immediately defended by it, not allowing them at the ſame time a vote in chuſing members of parliament; and as the frontiers of America bear the expences of their own defence, it ſeems hard to allow them no ſhare in voting the money, judging of the neceſſity and ſum, or adviſing the meaſures.

That, beſides the taxes neceſſary for the defence of the frontiers, the colonies pay yearly great ſums to the mother-country unnoticed: For taxes paid in Britain by the land-holder or artificer, muſt enter into and increaſe the price of the produce of land and manufactures made of it, and great part of this is paid by conſumers in the colonies, who thereby pay a conſiderable part of the Britiſh taxes.

We are reſtrained in our trade with foreign nations, notwithſtanding we could be ſupplied with many manufactures cheaper from them, but muſt buy the ſame dearer from Britain. The difference of price is a clear tax to Britain. We are obliged to carry a great part of our produce directly to Britain; and where the duties laid upon it leſſen its price to the planter, or it ſells for leſs than it would in foreign markets, the difference is a tax paid to Britain.

Some manufactures we could make, but are forbidden, and muſt take them of Britiſh merchants: The whole price is a tax paid to Britain.

By our greatly increaſing the demand and conſumption of Britiſh manufactures, their price is conſiderably raiſed of late years; the advantage is clear

profit

profit to Britain, and enables its people better to pay great taxes, and much of it being paid by us, is a clear tax to Britain.

In ſhort, as we are not ſuffered to regulate our trade, and reſtrain the importation and conſumption of Britiſh ſuperfluities (as Britain can the conſumption of foreign ſuperfluities), our whole wealth centers finally amongſt the merchants and inhabitants of Britain; and if we make them richer, and enable them better to pay their taxes, it is nearly the ſame as being taxed ourſelves, and equally beneficial to the crown.

This kind of ſecondary taxes, however, we do not complain of, though we have no ſhare in the laying or diſpoſing of them; but to pay immediate heavy taxes, in the laying on, appropriation, and diſpoſition of which, we have no part, and which perhaps we may know to be grievous, muſt ſeem hard meaſure to Engliſhmen, who cannot conceive that, by hazarding their lives and fortunes in ſubduing and ſettling new countries, and extending and increaſing the commerce of the mother nation, they have forfeited the native right of Britons, which they think ought rather to be given to them, as due to ſuch merit, if they had been before in a ſtate of ſlavery.

Theſe, and ſuch kind of things as theſe, I apprehend, will be thought and ſaid by the people, if the propoſed alteration of the Albany plan ſhould take place. Then the adminiſtration of the board of governors and council ſo appointed, not having the repreſentative body of the people to approve and unite

in its meaſures, and conciliate the minds of the people to them, will probably become ſuſpected and odious; dangerous animoſities and feuds will ariſe between the governors and governed, and every thing go into confuſion.

Perhaps I am too apprehenſive in this matter; but, having freely given my opinion and reaſons, your Excellency can judge better than I, whether there can be any weight in them; and the ſhortneſs of the time allowed me, will, I hope, in ſome degree, excuſe the imperfections of this ſcrawl.

With the greateſt reſpect and fidelity, I have the honour to be your Excellency's moſt obedient and moſt humble ſervant,

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER III.

SIR,

SINCE the converſation your Excellency was pleaſed to honour me with, on the ſubject of a more intimate connexion between the colonies and Great-Britain, by allowing them repreſentatives in Parliament; I have ſomething further conſidered that matter, and am of opinion, that ſuch an union would be very acceptable to the colonies, provided they had a reaſonable number of repreſentatives allowed them; and that all the old acts of parliament, reſtraining the trade or cramping the manufactures of the colonies, be at the ſame time repealed, and the Britiſh ſubjects

on

on this ſide of the water put, in thoſe reſpects, on the ſame footing with thoſe in Great-Britain, till the new parliament repreſenting the whole, ſhall think it for the intereſt of the whole to enact ſome or all of them: It is not that I imagine ſo many repreſentatives will be allowed the colonies, as to have any great weight by their numbers; but I think there might be ſufficient to occaſion thoſe laws to be better and more impartially conſidered, and perhaps to overcome the intereſt of a petty corporation, or of any particular ſet of artificers or traders in England, who heretofore ſeem, in ſome inſtances, to have been more regarded than all the colonies, or than was conſiſtent with the general intereſt or national good.

I think too, that the government of the colonies, by a parliament, in which they are fairly repreſented, would be vaſtly more agreeable to the people than the method lately attempted to be introduced by royal inſtructions, as well as more agreeable to the nature of the Engliſh conſtitution, and to Engliſh liberty; and that ſuch laws as now ſeem to bear hard on the colonies, would (when judged by ſuch parliament, for the beſt intereſt of the whole) be more cheerfully ſubmitted to, and more eaſily executed.

I ſhould hope too, that by ſuch an union the people of Great-Britain, and the people of the colonies, would learn to conſider themſelves, as not belonging to different communities with different intereſts, but to one community with one intereſt; which I imagine

gine would contribute to ſtrengthen the whole, and greatly leſſen the danger of future ſeparations.

It is, I ſuppoſe, agreed to be the general intereſt of any ſtate, that its people ſhould be numerous and rich; men enow to fight in its defence, and enow to pay ſufficient taxes to defray the charges; for theſe circumſtances tend to the ſecurity of the ſtate, and its protection from foreign powers. But it ſeems not of ſo much importance, whether the fighting be done by John or Thomas, or the tax paid by William or Charles.

The iron manufacture employs and enriches Britiſh ſubjects, but is it of any importance to the ſtate whether the manufacturers live at Birmingham or Sheffield, or both, ſince they are ſtill within its bounds, and their wealth and perſons are ſtill at its command?

Could the Goodwin ſands be laid dry by banks, and land equal to a large country thereby gained to England, and preſently filled with Engliſh inhabitants; would it be right to deprive ſuch inhabitants of the common privileges enjoyed by other Engliſhmen, the right of vending their produce in the ſame ports, or of making their own ſhoes, becauſe a merchant or a ſhoe-maker, living on the old land, might fancy it more for his own advantage to trade or make ſhoes for them? Would this be right, even if the land were gained at the expence of the ſtate? And would it not ſeem leſs right, if the charge and labour of gaining the additional territory to Britain, had been borne by the ſettlers themſelves? And would not the

the hardſhip appear yet greater, if the people of the new country ſhould be allowed no repreſentatives in a parliament, enacting ſuch impoſitions? Now I look on the colonies as ſo many countries gained to Great-Britain, and more advantageous to it than if they had been gained out of the ſea around our coaſt, and joined to its land; for, being in different climates, they afford greater variety of produce, and materials for more manufactures; and being ſeparated by the ocean, they increaſe much more its ſhipping and ſeamen; and ſince they are all included in the Britiſh empire, which has only extended itſelf by their means, and the ſtrength and wealth of the whole; what imports it to the general ſtate, whether a merchant, a ſmith, or a hatter, grow rich in Old or New England? And if, through increaſe of people, two ſmiths are wanted for one employed before, why may not the new ſmith be allowed to live and thrive in the new country, as well as the old one in the old? In fine, why ſhould the countenance of a ſtate be partially afforded to its people, unleſs it be moſt in favour of thoſe who have moſt merit? And, if there be any difference, thoſe who have moſt contributed to enlarge Britain's empire and commerce, increaſe her ſtrength, her wealth, and the numbers of her people, at the riſque of their own lives and private fortunes, in new and ſtrange countries, methinks ought rather to expect ſome preference.—With the greateſt reſpect and eſteem, I have the honour to be your Excellency's moſt obedient and humble ſervant,

B. FRANKLIN.

THE idea ſuggeſted in Letter III. of forming a more intimate union between Great-Britain and the colonies, by allowing them repreſentatives in parliament, would, in all human probability, have been attended with the happieſt conſequences to both; for, in the firſt place, it would have entirely precluded a civil war, and in the next, by infuſing a certain quantity of ſound and untainted blood into the body-politic, it might have repreſſed the groſs degeneracy of latter times, and ſtemmed that torrent of corruption, which at preſent bids fair to ſweep public virtue away from the face of the land.

During the war before the laſt, Dr. Franklin was eminently ſerviceable to the Britiſh government, by encouraging his countrymen to repel with vigour the common enemy; on this occaſion he commanded a company of artillery, and more than once headed the militia in ſeveral hazardous and ſucceſsful enterpriſes.

When Canada was reduced, he came over to England, and endeavoured, both by writing and converſation, to demonſtrate to the then miniſtry, the ſuperior importance of that province to all our acquiſitions in the Weſt-Indies; and as the peace of Paris was concluded upon this principle, our author's arguments and information may be ſuppoſed to have influenced, in ſome degree, a meaſure ſo obnoxious at that time to the greater part of the nation, and which, as far as

regards

regards the intereſt of Great-Britain alone, muſt be allowed to have proved highly impolitic.

There is every reaſon to believe that Dr. Franklin was ſtimulated upon that occaſion, by a ſincere deſire for the ſecurity and proſperity of Britiſh America, as connected with the parent ſtate, and that although he might have contemplated the future independency of the colonies, as an abſtract queſtion, he never could have been prevailed upon to make the experiment until he was forced, along with his countrymen, into a juſtifiable and meritorious oppoſition to a ſcheme, big with the moſt ruinous conſequences to the inhabitants of America, and perhaps, had it proved ſucceſsful, to the liberties of Great-Britain.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

He becomes a Member of the Aſſembly of Pennſylvania—Is appointed Agent to ſeveral of the American States—Sails for England—Is examined before a Committee of the Privy Council—Inſulted by the Attorney General—Departs privately for America.

IT was not until after he had paſſed the meridian of his life, that Dr. Franklin diſplayed to the world, that his talents were no leſs adapted to politics than the ſciences. His objections to the Albany plan, which we have already mentioned, his oppoſition to the *proprietary*, and his efforts in order to introduce the royal form of government into America in its ſtead, ſoon made him known to his fellow-citizens, and even to the Engliſh miniſtry, to whom he communicated a new plan for regulating the poſt-office in America. By way of recompenſe for this, he was appointed poſt-maſter general for the ſouthern department.

Being furniſhed with all the qualities neceſſary for conciliating popular favour, he alſo obtained a ſeat in the aſſembly of Pennſylvania.

He was ſoon after appointed agent from that province, in order to ſuperintend its intereſts in England, and was at that period held in ſuch high and general eſtimation by his countrymen, that he was alſo nominated agent for the provinces of New Jerſey, Virginia, and Georgia.

When the ſtamp-act, laying a certain tax upon bonds, notes, &c. was attempted to be impoſed in 1766 by the Britiſh parliament, on the inhabitants of North America, it experienced the warmeſt and moſt decided oppoſition on the part of the Doctor; and this impolitic bill was at length repealed. He himſelf is accuſed of having been the original projector of this very act; but let it be recollected that it was not the duty, but the *mode*, that he then objected to; a mode which eſtabliſhed the principle of levying impoſts upon a people, without, and even contrary to, their expreſs conſent, and thus bereaved them of the right of repreſentation. His examination before the houſe of commons in 1767, did him great honour, and the queſtions aſked by the then adminiſtration, and his replies, which were extremely forcible, were circulated and applauded throughout all the colonies.

The Americans now began to be ſenſible of their own conſequence, and the inhabitants of Boſton, at a public meeting on the 27th of October 1767, entered into a variety of reſolutions for encouraging manufactures, promoting economy, and reſtraining the uſe of foreign ſuperfluities. Theſe reſolutions, all of which were highly prejudicial to the trade of the mother-country, contained a long liſt of articles, which it was either determined not to uſe at all, or at leaſt in the ſmalleſt poſſible quantities.

A ſubſcription was opened at the ſame time, and a committee appointed, for the increaſe of their old manufactures, and the eſtabliſhment of new ones. Among other things, it was determined to give particular

ticular encouragement to the making of paper, glaſs, and the other commodities that were liable to the payment of the new duties upon importation. It was alſo reſolved to reſtrain the expences of funerals, to reduce dreſs to a degree of primitive ſimplicity and plainneſs, and in general not to purchaſe any commodities from the mother-country, that could be procured in any of the colonies.

All theſe reſolutions were either adopted, or ſimilar ones entered into, by all the old colonies on the continent.

The Americans being well acquainted with their own rights, were determined to maintain them, and they accordingly oppoſed to the acts of a venal court, reſolved to ſubjugate them to its authority, that calm and ſteady perſeverance worthy of men who were determined to be free.

The Engliſh miniſtry having once more evinced a deſign to tax the *unrepreſented* colonies, Dr. Franklin, who happened to be then in London, was examined before the privy-council, on the 11th and 19th of January 1774, reſpecting the ſtate of America. On that occaſion he diſplayed his uſual firmneſs and capacity, although he was treated in a very unpolite manner by the then attorney-general, who at this day preſides as chief juſtice in one of the courts of law.

This unworthy conduct was borne by the philoſopher with a calm and dignified ſerenity. It is aſſerted, however, that, after his examination, he

paſſed

paſſed by the "pert, prim prater *," in his way out, and took occaſion to whiſper the following truth in his ear: "*I will make your maſter a little king for this!*"

Soon after this examination, the Doctor was removed from his employment as poſt-maſter general of the ſouthern provinces of America, and was looked upon by the Britiſh government with ſuch a jealous eye, that ſome thoughts were entertained of arreſting him, under pretence of his having fomented a rebellion in the colonies. Having received intimation of their intentions, he left England in the beginning of the year 1775, and took his meaſures with ſuch privacy, that he had actually arrived in America before he was ſuſpected of entertaining any deſign of removing from the kingdom.

The act for impoſing a duty upon tea had now put the whole continent in commotion. The flame of liberty ſpread with the rapidity of lightning, from New Hampſhire to Georgia; councils of ſafety were formed in all the provinces; and every thing indicated a ſpeedy determination of that queſtion, whether America was henceforth to be peopled by freemen or by ſlaves?

* See Churchill's Works.

CHAP. IV.

The Doctor, ſoon after the Battle of Lexington, writes circular Letters to all the Colonies—Copy of a Letter to Mr. Strahan, a Printer and Member of Parliament—The Americans are in want of Money, Arms, and Ammunition—Emiſſion of Paper Money—The Views of the People and their Leaders—General Lee a ſtaunch Republican—The Congreſs declares the United States independent—The Doctor, at the Age of Seventy, repairs to France—The Succeſs of his Miſſion—His great and important Services to America—His Return to his native Country.

IN the ſpring of 1775, the Doctor *electrified* the whole continent by means of circular letters, written ſoon after the battle of Lexington. His bold and pathetic deſcription of this engagement arouſed the ſpirit of liberty in every boſom, and in ſome meaſure rendered a reconciliation impracticable between the mother-country and her colonies. Much about the ſame time, the following laconic epiſtle, addreſſed by him to Mr. Strahan, an eminent printer, at that time member for Malmſbury, and formerly one of his moſt intimate friends, appeared in the public papers:

"Mr. STRAHAN, *Philadelphia, July 5, 1775.*

"You are a member of that parliament, and "have formed part of that majority, which has con-"demned my native country to deſtruction.

"You

"You have begun to burn our towns, and to "deſtroy their inhabitants!

"Look at your hands—they are ſtained with the "blood of your relations and your acquaintances.

"You and I were long friends; you are at pre-"ſent my enemy, and I am your's.

"BENJAMIN FRANKLIN."

The diſputes between Great-Britain and her colonies began now to aſſume the moſt ſerious aſpect. Determined to perſiſt in their oppoſition to the impoſts attempted to be levied by means of Engliſh acts of parliament, it was neceſſary for the Americans to bethink themſelves of adopting proper and efficacious means of reſiſtance. They poſſeſſed little or no coin, and even arms and ammunition were wanting. In this ſituation, the adoption of paper money became indiſpenſably neceſſary, and Dr. Franklin was one of the firſt to demonſtrate the propriety of that meaſure: Without this, it would have been impoſſible to have made any other than a very feeble and a very ſhort reſiſtance againſt the mother-country.

The firſt emiſſion, to the amount of three millions of dollars, accordingly took place on the 25th of July 1775, under a promiſe of exchanging the notes againſt gold or ſilver in the ſpace of three years; and towards the end of 1776, more than twenty-one millions additional were put in circulation. The Congreſs at length began to be uneaſy, not knowing how it would be poſſible to redeem ſo large a ſum; and ſome of its

members having waited upon our author, in order to conſult him upon this occaſion, he ſpoke to them as follows: "Do not make yourſelves unhappy; con- "tinue to iſſue your paper money as long as it "will pay for the paper, ink, and printing, and we "ſhall be enabled by its means to liquidate all the "expences of the war."

It is a certain fact, that, at the beginning of the diſturbances, the bulk of the people acted from no fixed and determined plan whatever, and had not even an idea of independence; for all the addreſſes from the different colonies were filled with profeſſions of loyalty towards their ſovereign, and breathed the moſt ardent wiſhes for an immediate reconciliation. It is probable, however, that the principal leaders looked up to this as an ultimate, and perhaps neceſſary object.

The late General Lee in particular, inflamed with a republican zeal, travelled from colony to colony, ſtirred up a ſpirit of liberty in the breaſt of every American, and ſcorning to make uſe of diſſimulation, with all the candour and openneſs of a ſoldier, publicly preached up the doctrine of independence.

At length this important queſtion was agitated in Congreſs; the debate laſted for ſeveral days, and the ſcheme encountered the moſt violent oppoſition. It was combated by ſeveral diſtinguiſhed orators, and in particular by Mr. Dickinſon, author of the "Farmer's "Letters," Mr. Wilſon, a celebrated lawyer, and Mr. Galloway, who afterwards attached himſelf to the Engliſh government.

Doctor

Doctor Franklin, however, was firm as a rock, and remained inviolably attached to his darling ſcheme. No arguments adopted by them could make him abandon a ſyſtem, the adoption of which he felt to be abſolutely neceſſary; and moſt of his opponents at length ſeeing his unalterable determination, were induced to join with him in his plan.

After having gained this great and eſſential point, he perceived the immediate neceſſity of atchieving ſomething more. The continental paper money began to fall into diſcredit; arms, ammunition, and officers, were wanting; and without theſe, it would be in vain to combat the armies and the reſources of Great-Britain. He therefore turned his eyes towards Europe, and fixed them upon the ſole kingdom, whence he could draw the ſupplies neceſſary for the defence of his native country, and the preſervation of her independence. He accordingly obtained a commiſſion from Congreſs, and, in the 71ſt year of his age, repaired to France as their ambaſſador, perſuaded that this was the proper theatre for the exertion of his talents, and that his reputation as a philoſopher would conciliate the affection of a nation, whoſe intereſts were eminently connected with thoſe of America.

He was right in his conjectures. He landed at Nantz on the 17th of December 1776, and the moment he arrived there, all ranks of men were eager to pay their reſpects to him.

Soon after his appearance at the court of Verſailles, where he was received with every mark of diſtinction and eſteem, he and Mr. Silas Deane, his colleague, tranſmitted ſeveral memorials to Lord Stormont, the Engliſh ambaſſador there, relative to the exchange of priſoners; but that nobleman, with an ariſtocratic pride, worthy of the cauſe in which he was engaged, replied haughtily, "that he would not receive any "letters from rebels, unleſs they contained a petition "for pardon!!!"

In conjunction with Mr. Deane, he now granted letters of marque to a number of French-American privateers, which haraſſed the Engliſh coaſts, and intercepted an immenſe number of merchantmen.

Lord Stormont immediately preſented a memorial to the miniſter, and demanded a categorical anſwer relative to the conduct of France.

On this, Count de Vergennes affected to obſerve a greater degree of reſerve in regard to the American plenipotentiaries, who were now but very rarely honoured with an audience.

At length the news of the ſurrender of the Britiſh army commanded by General Burgoyne, to that of the Americans under General Gates, at Saratoga, on the 17th of October 1777, arrived in France, at the very moment when the cabinet council was as yet undecided in regard to the ſteps to be adopted relative to the United States. This memorable event immediately inclined the balance, and fixed the French nation in their attachment to the infant republic.

The

The news of the defeat and the capture of this Britiſh general, was received in France with as great demonſtrations of joy, as if it had been a victory gained over their own enemies.

Franklin, with his uſual addreſs, took advantage of this circumſtance, and hinted to the Count de Maurepas, "that there was not a ſingle moment to be loſt, "if he wiſhed to ſecure the friendſhip of America, "and detach her entirely from the mother-country."

Fearful leſt a reconciliation ſhould take place between Great-Britain and her colonies, the court of France inſtantly determined to declare its intentions, and accordingly, on the 16th of December 1777, M. Gerard, ſecretary to the council, repaired to the hotel of the American ambaſſadors, and informed them, by order of the King: "that after a long and "mature deliberation upon their propoſitions, his "Majeſty had reſolved to recognize the independence "of, and to enter into a treaty of commerce and alli-"ance with, the United States of America; and that he "would not only acknowledge their independence, "but actually ſupport it with all the means in his "power; that perhaps he was about to find himſelf "engaged in an expenſive war upon their ac-"count, but that he did not expect to be reimburſed "by them; that, in fine, the Americans were not "to think that he had entered into this reſolution "ſolely with a view of ſerving them, ſince, independ-"ently of his real attachment to them and their "cauſe, it was evidently the intereſt of France to

" diminiſh the power of England, by diſſevering her " colonies from her."

On the 30th of January 1778, a treaty was accordingly ſigned and concluded at Paris, between France and America. This will ever form a memorable epoch in the hiſtory of mankind, becauſe it was in conſequence of this alliance that the inſurgent colonies were able to reſiſt the mother-country, and that the French nation, in the ſhort ſpace of ten years, acquired a fondneſs and attachment to the cauſe of liberty, that impelled them to vindicate their own rights, and put an end to a deſpotiſm at once diſgraceful and humiliating to humanity.

The Engliſh ambaſſador about this time thought proper to leave Paris; and it has been affirmed, that the day on which Lord Stormont quitted the French capital, formed the happieſt one in the whole courſe of Dr. Franklin's life.

Hoſtilities commenced ſoon after this, between Great-Britain and France, and M. Gerard was nominated by his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, ambaſſador to the new States of America.

Before his departure, our author communicated a plan to him for ſurpriſing the Britiſh fleet and army then in the Delaware; and Count d'Eſtaing was employed to execute this important enterpriſe; which would certainly have proved ſucceſsful, had it not been for a ſeries of bad weather and contrary winds. In conſequence of theſe unforeſeen obſtacles, the French admiral arrived too late upon the American coaſt;

coaſt; for the Engliſh army had evacuated Philadelphia, and the fleet was then riding in perfect ſafety at Sandy-Hook.

The affection of the French for the Americans ſeemed to riſe to a degree little ſhort of enthuſiaſm. The portraits of the principal perſons engaged in the revolution, occupied the pencils and the gravers of their moſt famous artiſts, while their lives employed the pens of their moſt celebrated writers. But among all theſe great characters, our philoſopher was diſtinguiſhed in a particular manner, and ſeveral of the provinces of France actually diſputed the honour of having given birth to his anceſtors, and endeavoured to prove, by the ſimilitude of the name, that he was of French deſcent! The following is an extract from the Gazette of Amiens, the capital of Picardy:

"The painter to his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty" (ſays the editor) "has exhauſted all his talents upon a pic-
"ture dedicated to the genius of Franklin. One be-
"holds the philoſopher holding in one hand the
"*Ægis* of Minerva, which he oppoſes to a thunder-
"bolt, and with the other ordering the god of war
"to combat avarice and tyranny, while America, re-
"poſing upon his breaſt in a noble attitude, and
"holding in her hand a bundle of rods, the faithful
"emblem of the United States, ſurveys her con-
"quered enemies with a look of tranquillity. In
"this compoſition, the painter has very faithfully co-
"pied the idea preſented by the Latin hemiſtich, ſo
"frequently applied to him.

"The

"The name of Franklin is ſo celebrated, that it "ought to render every one vain who bears it. It "may be even permitted to a nation to claim the re- "putation of having originally produced the family "of a man ſo renowned; and we think that we have "a right to diſpute with the Engliſh that honour, of "which they have rendered themſelves ſo un- "worthy.

"Franklin, as the very name implies, appears at "firſt ſight to belong to the French rather than to "their neighbours. It is certain that the name of "Franklin, or *Franquelin*, is very common in Pi- "cardy, more eſpecially in the diſtricts of Virneu and "Ponthieu.

"It is very probable that one of the Doctor's "anceſtors inhabited this country, whence he "paſſed into England either with the fleet under the "command of *Jean de Biencourt*, or that which was "fitted out by the nobility of the ſame province. In "genealogical conjectures there are far more bold "and hardy ſuppoſitions than this.

"There alſo lived at Abbeville, during the fif- "teenth and ſixteenth centuries, a family of the "name of Franklin. We find in the public regiſters "of that city, that in 1521 a perſon of the name of "John, and another of Thomas Franklin, were "woollen-drapers at Abbeville. This family re- "mained there until the year 1600. It then diſ- "perſed into the country, and ſome of its deſcendants "are to be found at this very day at *Aix le-Chateau*.

"Theſe

"These observations are a new homage which we "offer to the genius of Franklin."

All those devoted to letters and to science were ambitious to pay their respects to the philosopher of Philadelphia. Louis XVI. having instituted the Royal Society of Medicine, by letters patent, in 1778, Dr. Franklin was appointed one of the sixty corresponding members, his name having been put at the head of the list, by *the King's own hand.*

Thus our author enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing himself generally honoured and esteemed in France. His influence even extended to Spain and several other countries; where he kept up a correspondence that proved highly serviceable to the American cause.

"All Europe," says he, in a letter to a friend at Philadelphia, "is united in our favour. They "have translated and published here, the insti- "tutes of the United States, a circumstance which "affords ample matter for reflection and speculation "to our politicians. The opinion of the best im- "formed men is, that if you succeed in establishing "your liberty, the moment that peace is declared, "you will receive an immense addition of riches, "by means of the families who will be eager to leave "this hemisphere, in order to partake of your pri- "vileges. Tyranny is so generally established in "Europe, that the prospect of *an asylum* in America "causes an universal joy to all those who love free- "dom;

"dom; and your cauſe is already eſteemed that "of the human race."

The Doctor was ſoon enabled to draw conſiderable ſuccour and aſſiſtance from his new allies, and in matters of finance the Congreſs more than once had recourſe to his talents.

Out of the ſums furniſhed by the court of France for the pay and ſupport of the American armies, he found means to honour an immenſe number of bills drawn upon him from America, to advance the ſalaries of all the miniſters employed in Europe, and to relieve the diſtreſſes of ſuch of his unfortunate countrymen as had fallen into the hands of the Engliſh.

It is evident that the addreſs, patriotiſm, and abilities of this philoſophical ſtateſman, were eminently ſerviceable to his countrymen, and it is more than probable that, without his aid, Congreſs would never have been able to have ſupported their armies at home, or acquired alliances and aſſiſtance abroad.

During the ſpace of nine whole years, Dr. Franklin was engaged in the moſt important and active ſcenes, as miniſter plenipotentiary from America at the court of France. Having at length beheld the accompliſhment of all his wiſhes, by the concluſion of a general peace in 1783, in conſequence of which the independence of the United States was fully acknowledged and recogniſed, he became deſirous of reviſiting his native country.

He

He accordingly requeſted to be recalled, and, after repeated ſolicitations, Mr. Jefferſon was appointed his ſucceſſor. On the arrival of that gentleman in Paris, Dr. Franklin repaired to Havre de Grace, and croſſing the Engliſh Channel, landed in the Iſle of Wight. At this place he again embarked on board of the London Packet, Captain Truxton, and arrived in Philadelphia in September 1785.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Dr. Franklin arrives in Philadelphia amidſt the Acclamations of his Fellow-citizens—Is elected Governor of Pennſylvania—Aſſiſts at the General Convention—Speech on the Concluſion of the New Conſtitution—The Effect of early Habits and Attachments.

ON his arrival in Philadelphia, Dr. Franklin was received amidſt the acclamations of an immenſe number of the inhabitants, who flocked from all parts in order to ſee him, and conducted him in triumph to his own houſe. In the mean time, the cannon and the bells of the city announced the glad tidings to the neighbouring country, and he was waited upon by the Congreſs, the univerſity, and all the principal citizens, who were eager to teſtify their eſteem and veneration for his character.

In the month of October following, he was elected Governor of Pennſylvania, and he occupied that honourable office until October 1788.

The Americans, on the return of peace, did not enjoy all the advantages ariſing from their emancipation ſo ſuddenly as had been predicted. The credit of many of the States was at a very low ebb; ſome of them were torn with the intrigues of contending parties; the government was without either force or dignity; their commerce was circumſcribed within very narrow bounds; and their merchants in general were not far removed from a ſtate

of bankruptcy. In this poſture of affairs, it was thought proper to aſſemble a general convention, in order to form a more energetic conſtitution.

The convention accordingly aſſembled at Philadelphia in 1788, and Dr. Franklin ſat in it as the repreſentative of Pennſylvania. At the concluſion of their deliberations, he roſe and ſpoke as follows:

"MR. PRESIDENT,

"I muſt frankly avow, that I do not approve the "whole of the preſent conſtitution, but I dare not "affirm that I ſhall never approve of it. I have "lived a great many years, and I have been obliged "twenty times, after more ample information, and "more mature deliberations, to alter my opinions, "even in matters of the utmoſt importance.

"The more I have advanced in years, the more I "have learned to diſtruſt my own judgment, and to "reſpect that of others. The majority of mankind, "like the majority of religious ſects, think that they, "and they only, poſſeſs the knowledge of ſalvation, "and term every thing error and untruth, which "contradicts, or even differs from, their ſyſtem.

"A great Engliſh writer, in a dedication to the "Pope, ſays, 'the only difference that exiſts between "your church and ours, relative to the certainty of "their doctrines, is, that the church of Rome is in-"fallible, and that the church of England is never "in the wrong.'

"Although moſt individuals have nearly as high "an opinion of their own infallibility, as that of "their ſect, no perſon perhaps ever expreſſed this

"opinion

" opinion ſo naturally as a young French woman,
" in a trifling diſpute with her brother: 'I do not
" know how it comes about,' ſays ſhe, 'but I can
" never find any perſon always in the right, like
" myſelf!'

" It is in conſequence of theſe ſentiments, Mr. Pre-
" ſident, that I adhere to the new conſtitution, and I
" adopt it with all its faults, if it has any, becauſe I
" know we are abſolutely in want of a *general go-*
" *vernment*, and that there is not any government,
" whatever may be its form, which cannot be made
" a good one, provided it be well adminiſtered.

" I know alſo, that this which we have adopted
" may be well adminiſtered, during a number of
" years, and that if it at length ſhould degenerate
" into deſpotiſm (an inconvenience which until
" this day no government has been able to avoid),
" this at leaſt will not happen until the people
" become ſo corrupt, as not to be ruled by any other
" than a deſpot.

" I know not neither, whether any ſimilar aſſem-
" bly could make a better conſtitution; for whenever
" many men aſſemble together in order to communi-
" cate their knowledge and their ſentiments, it is im-
" poſſible to prevent their prejudices, their paſſions,
" their errors, their local and perſonal intereſts, from
" *aſſembling* along with them.

" From an aſſociation of men ſo compoſed, is a
" perfect work to be expected?

" I am indeed aſtoniſhed to ſee that the ſyſtem
" eſtabliſhed by us, approaches ſo near to perfection;

"I alſo think, that it is admirably calculated to ſur-
"priſe our enemies, who expected to hear that we
"were in a ſtate of tumult and confuſion; that the
"different States were on the point of diſuniting,
"and that the Americans would never meet but in
"order to cut each others throats.

"I adhere, Mr. Preſident, to this conſtitution, be-
"cauſe I could not expect a better; and becauſe I
"am not ſure that it is not the beſt which we could
"have.

"I ſacrifice my private opinion to the general
"good; if I have thought that I diſcovered errors in
"it, I have not ſaid a ſingle word on that ſubject out
"of this houſe. Theſe errors (if they really exiſt)
"have originated within theſe walls; they ought alſo
"to periſh here: But if any of us, on our return
"home among our conſtituents, permit ourſelves to
"repeat the objections we have heard urged in this
"place againſt any part of the new conſtitution; and
"if, in order to ſupport our objections, we endea-
"vour to make partiſans, we ſhall, in conſequence
"of this, loſe the effects and advantages that ought
"naturally to reſult from our unanimity, whether
"real or apparent, as well in our own country, as
"among foreign nations.

"The force and efficacy of a government, as far
"as it concerns the creating and inſuring the happi-
"neſs of a people, depends greatly on opinion; I
"ſay upon the opinion generally eſtabliſhed of the
"goodneſs of that government, as well as of the
"ſagacity and integrity of thoſe who govern.

" I hope, therefore, for our own good, for that " of the people, and for that of our poſterity, that we " ſhall reunite every heart and every will upon this " occaſion; that all our efforts henceforth ſhall tend " to make the conſtitution be beloved, cheriſhed, and " reſpected, wherever our influence may extend, and " that henceforth we ſhall only occupy our minds with " the beſt means of adminiſtering and enforcing it.

" I deſire, above all things, Mr. Preſident, that " every member of the Aſſembly who may have any " objections to make againſt the conſtitution, would, " upon this occaſion, doubt a little with me of his " own *abſolute infallibility*; and in order to manifeſt " our unanimity, ſubſcribe his name to this public " act.—I now, therefore, move, that the concluſion " of this bill ſhall run as follows:—" Enacted in Ge- " neral Aſſembly, by the unanimous conſent of all " the, &c. &c."

The above motion was inſtantly adopted.

This amiable and conciliatory diſcourſe, which fully demonſtrates, that an obſtinate and pertinacious ſelf-ſufficiency formed no part of the character of this great and amiable man, was the laſt pronounced by him in public. As long, however, as his faculties remained in full vigour, he continued to publiſh poli- tical admonitions to his countrymen.

It is with difficulty that any one abandons the ſtudies and occupations he has been accuſtomed to during his youth. Thus we have ſeen the Rev. John Weſley, while nearly in his ninetieth year, tra- velling through the kingdom, and propagating his religious tenets. Thus, alſo, the great Franklin, in

an

an age nearly as advanced, continued to occupy his mind with his favourite ideas; to inſtruct the people by means of his writings; to excite their ambition by his example, and to improve their morals by his ſage and benevolent converſation.

CHAP. VI.

Effects of Temperance—Dr Franklin's Health becomes infirm—He is seized with a Fever—Dies in consequence of an Impostume—Character—Opinions concerning Death—Legacies——Testimonies of Foreigners respecting his Philosophical Labours—Burial—Account of the Honours paid to his Memory—List of his Works—Epitaph.

DURING the greatest part of his life, Dr. Franklin had enjoyed an almost uninterrupted state of good health, and this he entirely attributed to his exemplary temperance.

In the year 1735, indeed, he was seized with a pleurisy, which ended in a suppuration of the left lobe of the lungs, so that he was almost suffocated by the quantity of matter thrown up. But from this, as well as from another attack of the same kind, he recovered so completely, that his breath was not in the least affected.

As he advanced in years, however, he became subject to fits of the gout, to which, in 1782, a nephritic cholic was superadded. From this time, he was also affected with the stone, as well as the gout; and for the last twelve months of his life, these complaints almost intirely confined him to his bed.

Notwithstanding his distressed situation, neither his mental faculties nor his natural cheerfulness ever forsook

forſook him. His memory was tenacious to the very laſt; and he ſeemed to be an exception to the general rule, that, at a certain period of life, the organs which are ſubſervient to this faculty become callous; a remarkable inſtance of which is, that he learned to ſpeak French after he had attained the age of ſeventy.

In the beginning of April 1790, about ſixteen days before his death, he was ſeized with a feveriſh diſorder, which at firſt did not exhibit any particular ſymptoms; but upon the third or fourth day was attended with a pain in the left breaſt. This at length became very acute, and was accompanied with a cough and a difficulty of breathing. He continued in this ſituation for five days, when the painful ſymptoms ceaſed at once, and his family began to flatter themſelves with hopes of his recovery. But a new impoſthume had now taken place in the lungs, which breaking ſuddenly as the others had done, he was unable to expectorate the matter fully. In conſequence of this, an oppreſſion of the organs of reſpiration, and a lethargic diſpoſition, came on, which gradually increaſing, he expired ſoon after.

Thus died, on the 17th of April 1790, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, one of the moſt celebrated and extraordinary men of which the preſent age can boaſt.

His life affords one of the fineſt moral leſſons that can be offered up to the admiration, the applauſe, or the imitation of mankind.

As a man, we have beheld him practiſing and inculcating the virtues of frugality, temperance, and induſtry.

As a citizen, we have ſeen him repelling the efforts of tyranny, and aſcertaining the liberty of his countrymen.

As a legiſlator, he affords a bright example of a genius ſoaring above corruption, and continually aiming at the happineſs of his conſtituents.

As a politician, we ſurvey him, on one hand, acquiring the aid of a powerful nation, by means of his ſkilful negotiations; and on the other, calling forth the common ſtrength of a congreſs of republics, by fixing a central point to which they could all look up, and concentrating their common force, for the purpoſes of union, harmony, legiſlation, and defence.

As a philoſopher, his labours and his diſcoveries are calculated to advance the intereſts of humanity: He might, indeed, have been juſtly termed the friend of man, the benefactor of the univerſe!

The purſuits and occupations of his early youth afford a moſt excellent and inſtructive example to the young; his middle life, to the adult; his advanced years, to the aged. From him the poor may learn to acquire wealth, and the rich to adapt it to the purpoſes of beneficence.

In regard to his character, he was rather ſententious than fluent; more diſpoſed to liſten, than to talk; a judicious, rather than an engaging companion. He was what, perhaps, every able man is, impatient of interruption; for he uſed to mention the cuſtom

of

of the Indians with great applauſe, who, after liſtening with a profound attention to the obſervations of each other, preſerve a reſpectful ſilence for ſome minutes, before they begin their own reply.

He was polite in his manners, and never gave a pointed contradiction to the aſſertions of his friends or his antagoniſts, but treated every argument with great calmneſs, and conquered his adverſaries rather by the force of reaſon, than aſſertion. His ſentiments reſpecting death may be gathered from the following extract of a letter, written near forty years ago, to Miſs Hubbard, on the deceaſe of her father-in-law, Mr. John Franklin:

"We are ſpirits. That bodies ſhould be lent us, "while they can afford us pleaſure, and aſſiſt us in "acquiring knowledge, or doing good to our fel- "low-creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God.

"When they are unfit for theſe purpoſes, and af- "ford us pain, in the place of pleaſure; inſtead of "an aid they become an incumbrance, and anſwer "none of the intentions for which they were given; "it is then equally kind and benevolent to provide "us a way, by which we may get rid of them.

"Death is that way.

"Our friend and we are invited abroad on a "party of pleaſure, that is to laſt for ever. His car- "riage was firſt ready, and he is gone before us; "we could not all conveniently ſtart together; why "ſhould you and I, my dear madam, be grieved at "this, ſince we are ſoon to follow, and know where "to find him?"

Dr. Franklin left one ſon, Governor William Franklin, a zealous loyaliſt during the unfortunate American war, and a daughter married to Mr. William Bache, a merchant in Philadelphia.

This lady, who was a great favourite, attended him during his laſt illneſs. Three days previous to his deceaſe, he begged that his bed might be made, "in "order that he might die in a decent manner;" an idea evidently ſuggeſted by an acquaintance with the cuſtoms of the ancients. Mrs. Bache having replied, that ſhe hoped he would recover, and live many years longer, he inſtantly rejoined, "I hope not."

He bequeathed the greateſt part of his fortune to Mr. and Mrs. Bache for their joint lives, and ordered that it ſhould be equally divided afterwards, among their children. To the Governor's ſon, William Temple Franklin, he left ſome lands in Georgia, the greateſt part of his library, and all his manuſcripts, beſides ſomething additional in caſe of marriage. He alſo left ſeveral public legacies; to the library of Philadelphia 3000 volumes; to Judge Hopkins, his philoſophical apparatus; and to the Preſident of the United States, his gold-headed cane.

The teſtamentary deviſe of the latter is as follows:

"My gold-headed cane, curiouſly wrought in the "form of a cap of liberty, I leave to my friend, and "the friend of mankind, General Waſhington; if it "were a ſceptre, he has merited it, and would become it."

The moſt illuſtrious foreigners have teſtified their admiration of his philoſophical labours. Beccaria, ſo celebrated for his Eſſay on "Crimes and Puniſh-

"ments,"

" ments," to his curious treatiſe, intitled, " Elettrico " Artificiale," has prefixed a complimentary letter to Dr. Franklin, in which he conſiders him as " the " father of electricity," and ſpeaks of his diſcoveries with enthuſiaſm.

" To you," ſays he, addreſſing himſelf to the American philoſopher, " it was given to enlighten " the mind of man in this new ſcience. It is you " who have diſarmed the thunder of all its terrors, " and your daring genius has even taught the fire of " Heaven, that was looked upon as the weapon of " Omnipotence, to obey your voice!"

" Newton," adds the Chevalier de Chatelleux, in his diſcourſe *De la Felicité Publique*, " has diſ- " covered the laws of optics, and Deſcartes, of " dioptrics. A great and magnificent diſcovery was " reſerved for theſe times—and this is electricity, " the terrible effects of which have placed mankind " on an equality with the gods of antiquity; for " Franklin, like another Prometheus, has acquired " the art of ſtealing celeſtial fire, and rendering it " ductile to his laws."

M. D'Alembert, upon his reception as a member of the French Academy, alluding to the ſucceſs of his philoſophical and political labours, welcomed him with the well-known line, which rivals the boldneſs and ſublimity of Lucan:

" Eripuit cœlo fulmen, ſceptrumque tyrannis."

And M. Dubourg, the firſt Frenchman who openly eſpouſed the cauſe of America, placed the following inſcription under his buſt:

" Il

" Il a ravi le feu des cieux :
" Il fait fleurir les arts en des climats ſauvages :
" L'Amerique le place à la tête de ſes ſages ;
" La Grece l'auroit mis au nombre de ſes dieux."

All that was mortal of this great man, was interred on the 21ſt of April, in the cemetery of Chriſt's Church, Philadelphia, in that part adjoining to Arch-ſtreet, in order that, if a monument ſhould be erected over his grave, it might be ſeen to more advantage.

Never was any funeral ſo numerouſly and ſo reſpectably attended in any part of the States of America. The concourſe of people aſſembled upon this occaſion was immenſe. All the bells in the city were muffled, and the very newſpapers were publiſhed with black edges. The body was interred amidſt peals of artillery; and nothing was omitted that could diſplay the veneration of the citizens for ſuch an illuſtrious character.

The Congreſs ordered a general mourning for one month, throughout America; the National Aſſembly * of France paid the ſame compliment for three days;

* *National Aſſembly, 11th June* 1790.

M. Mirabeau the elder, having demanded and obtained leave to ſpeak, addreſſed the Aſſembly as follows:

" FRANKLIN IS DEAD!" . . . . . .

[*A profound ſilence reigns throughout the hall.*]

" The genius, which gave freedom to America, and ſcattered " torrents of light upon Europe, is returned to the boſom of the " Divinity.

" The

days; and the commons of Paris, as an extraordinary tribute of honour to his memory, aſſiſted in a body at

" The ſage, whom two worlds claim; the man, diſputed by the " hiſtory of the ſciences and the hiſtory of empires, holds, moſt " undoubtedly, an elevated rank in the human ſpecies.

" Political cabinets have but too long notified the death of " thoſe who were never great but in their funeral orations; the " etiquette of courts has but too long ſanctioned hypocritical " grief.—Nations ought only to mourn for their benefactors; " the repreſentatives of free men ought never to recommend any " other than the heroes of humanity to their homage.

" The Congreſs hath ordered a general mourning for one " month throughout the fourteen confederated States, on account " of the death of Franklin: And America hath thus acquitted her " tribute of admiration in behalf of one of the fathers of her " conſtitution.

" Would it not be worthy of you, fellow-legiſlators, to unite " yourſelves in this religious act, to participate in this homage " rendered in the face of the univerſe to the rights of man, and " to the philoſopher who has ſo eminently propagated the con- " queſt of them throughout the world?

" Antiquity would have elevated altars to that mortal, who, " for the advantage of the human race, embracing both heaven " and earth in his vaſt and extenſive mind, knew how to ſubdue " thunder and tyranny.

" Enlightened and free, Europe at leaſt owes its remembrance " and its regret to one of the greateſt men who has ever ſerved " the cauſe of philoſophy and of liberty.

" I propoſe, that a decree do now paſs, enacting, that the Na- " tional Aſſembly ſhall wear mourning during three days for " Benjamin Franklin."

M. M. de Rochefoucault and La Fayette immediately roſe, in order to ſecond this motion.

The Aſſembly adopted it, at firſt by acclamation; and afterwards decreed, by a large majority, amidſt the plaudits of all the ſpectators,

at the funeral oration *, delivered by the Abbé Fauchet (now conſtitutional biſhop of Calvados), in the Rotunda, which was hung with black, illuminated with chandeliers, and decorated with devices analogous to the occaſion.

Dr. Smith, Provoſt of the College of Philadelphia, and Mr. Rittenhouſe, one of its members, were ſelected by the Philoſophical Society to prepare an eulogium to the memory of its founder; and the ſubſcribers to the city library, who had juſt erected a handſome building for containing their books, left a vacant niche for a ſtatue of their benefactor.

This was accordingly placed there a few months ſince. It was imported from Italy; the name of the artiſt is Francis Lazzarini; it is compoſed of Carara marble, and coſt 500 guineas.

It is the firſt piece of ſculpture of that ſize, which has ever been ſeen in America. The following inſcription, which perhaps ſays too much concerning the donor, and too little about the philoſopher, is engraven on the pedeſtal:

THIS STATUE
OF
DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
WAS PRESENTED BY
WILLIAM BINGHAM, Eſq.
1792.

ſpectators, that on Monday the 14th of June it ſhould go into mourning for three days; that the diſcourſe of M. Mirabeau ſhould be printed; and that the Preſident ſhould write a letter of condolence, upon the occaſion, to the Congreſs of America.

* See a tranſlation of this at the end of this volume.

Dr.

Dr. Franklin is repreſented in a ſtanding poſture; one arm is ſupported by means of ſome books in his right hand he wields an inverted ſceptre, an emblem of his antimonarchical principles; and in his left, a ſcroll of paper. He is dreſſed in a Roman toga. The reſemblance is ſaid to be correct; the head is a copy from the famous buſt produced by the chiſſel of Houdon.

The works of Dr. Franklin are numerous, and fully diſplay the verſatility of his genius, for which nothing appears to have been too little or too great.

I. Some Letters, which he addreſſed to Sir Hans Sloane, in the year 1726, when he was only 21 years of age.

II. Experiments and Obſervations in Electricity, &c. made at Philadelphia; in two parts. 4to, 1753.

III. New Experiments, &c. on the ſame ſubject. 1754.

N. B. Theſe two laſt were publiſhed in one volume, in 1769; and contain, beſides his experiments in natural philoſophy, a deſcription of his "new-invented Pennſylvania fire-ſtoves" for the better warming of rooms with a ſmall expence of fuel; obſervations concerning the increaſe of mankind, and the peopling of countries; aphoriſms on the nature and cauſe of evaporation; obſervations on the nature of fire; the production of animal heat; the phenomena and probable cauſes of whirlwinds; a compariſon between the old Scotch and the modern Italian muſic, &c. &c.

IV. An Hiſtorical Review of the Conſtitution and Government of Pennſylvania, 1759. Anonymous.

V. The Intereſt of Great Britain conſidered with regard to her Colonies, and the Acquiſition of Canada and Guadeloupe. 1760. Anon.

VI. Political, Miſcellaneous, and Philoſophical Pieces, never before collected. 1779. 4to and 8vo.

N. B. The papers in this collection are arranged in five different diviſions.

The 1ſt contains eſſays on general politics.

The 2d, upon ſubjects relative to America before the breaking out of the civil war. Theſe breathe throughout the ſpirit of peace and conciliation. They expreſs the moſt anxious deſire to unite and blend the intereſts of the parent country and her colonies in one common maſs of public felicity; and to prevent every meaſure that had a tendency to eſtrange and alienate the two countries from each other.

The 3d contains papers written during the conteſt.

The 4th, papers on provincial and local politics.

And the 5th, all his philoſophical and miſcellaneous pieces not printed.

Among the papers in this diviſion, we ought not to omit mentioning a production read by his countrymen with much avidity. It is called "The Way to "Wealth, as clearly ſhewn in the Preface of an old "Pennſylvania Almanack, intitled, "*Poor Richard* "*improved.*" Dr. Franklin, who had for many years publiſhed "Poor Richard's Almanack," in Philadelphia, furniſhed it with a variety of ſentences and proverbs relative to induſtry, attention to buſineſs, frugality, &c. The greater part of theſe he at laſt collected, and digeſted in the above general preface.

VII. Phy-

VII. Phyſical and Meteorological Obſervations, Conjectures, and Suppoſitions.

N. B. This appeared firſt in the Philoſ. Tranſ. vol. lv. for 1765; and in vol. lxiv. part i. for 1774, appeared his curious paper, "on the ſtilling "of Waves by means of Oil."

In ſhort, the aim of this great man was to be generally uſeful.

His Advice to Servants—to Settlers in America; his Rules for Clubs and Converſation; his Directions for the Cure of Smoky Chimnies, &c. &c. abundantly evince that he deemed no ſubject too humble for his pen, provided it might be ſerviceable to his fellow-creatures *.

The

* The following circumſtance will evince how much and how generally this great man was beloved in France:

On the 14th of June 1790, the citizens of Paris, imitating the example of the National Aſſembly, appeared alſo in mourning.—On the ſame day, the friends of the Revolution, and of humanity, aſſembled at the *Café Procope*, and wiſhing to render all the honors to the memory of the celebrated Franklin, which are ſo juſtly due to it, ordered all the glaſſes to be covered with crape, and the inner apartment to be hung with black. On the door towards the ſtreet, was the following inſcription:

FRANKLIN EST MORT!

(*Franklin is dead!*)

At one end of the apartment, was placed his buſt crowned with oak-leaves; and at the foot of the pedeſtal, was engraven the word

VIR.

Two cypreſſes elevated their melancholy branches above it; on the two ſides of it, were the celeſtial and terreſtrial globes, charts, &c.; and under it, a ſerpent biting his tail, as an emblem of immortality.

An

The following epitaph, written by himself, some years before his death, conveys at once a true idea of the simplicity of his manners, and of the ingeniousness with which he could make use of the terms of his original profession, as a medium for conveying his thoughts:

THE BODY
OF
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PRINTER,
(LIKE THE COVER OF AN OLD BOOK,
ITS CONTENTS TORN OUT,
AND STRIPPED OF ITS LETTERING AND GILDING,)
LIES HERE, FOOD FOR THE WORMS;
YET THE WORK ITSELF SHALL NOT BE LOST,
FOR IT SHALL, AS HE BELIEVES,
APPEAR, ONCE MORE,
IN A NEW
AND MOST BEAUTIFUL EDITION,
CORRECTED AND REVISED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

An orator read a simple but pathetic discourse, in which he recounted the benefits this illustrious Philosopher had conferred upon mankind; and in order to honour his *manes* in a manner still more worthy of him, on the preceding day, a quantity of bread bought by subscription, in which every one was eager to concur, was distributed among the people.

PART III.

COLLECTION

OF

FRAGMENTS, ANECDOTES, &c. &c.

RELATING TO

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

* THE American Revolution has produced a multitude of virtuous citizens, intrepid warriors, and enlightened politicians; but we have seen no one poſſeſs, in ſo high a degree, the character of a true philoſopher, as Dr. Benjamin Franklin. His love of mankind occupied every inſtant of his life; and he diſplayed the moſt indefatigable zeal in their ſervice. His knowledge was great and extenſive, his manners were ſimple, his morals were pure.

This portrait will not afford a line of ſeparation ſufficiently marked between him and other patriot politicians, if I do not add a characteriſtic feature to

* Tranſlated from the *Patriote François* of M. Briſſot de Warville, a member of the National Aſſembly and National Convention of France.

it; this is, that Franklin, in the midſt of the vaſt ſcene in which he acted ſuch a brilliant and conſpicuous character, kept his eyes conſtantly fixed on a theatre infinitely more vaſt and extenſive,—on Heaven, and a future life! This is the ſole circumſtance that can ſupport and aggrandize man upon earth, and make of him a true philoſopher.

The different anecdotes recounted in the firſt part of his private life, might afford, to an attentive obſerver, ſome idea of his character; and it indeed appears to me to be impoſſible to read it, without a certain degree of tenderneſs, mingled with reſpect.—It exhibits Franklin ſtrolling about the ſtreets of Philadelphia with about four-and-ſixpence in his pocket, unknown to any of the inhabitants, eating one loaf with avidity, holding another under each arm, and quenching his thirſt with the water of the Delaware!

Who could have dreamed that this miſerable wanderer ſhould become one of the future legiſlators of America; the ornament of the new world; the pride of modern philoſophy, and an ambaſſador to a nation the moſt rich, the moſt powerful, and the moſt enlightened in the univerſe?

Who could have believed that France, that Europe, ſhould one day elevate ſtatues to a man, who had nowhere to repoſe his head?

This circumſtance recalls to my memory J. J. Rouſſeau, with three halfpence (his whole fortune) in his purſe, and tormented by famine, balancing in his own mind whether he ought to ſacrifice his all,

in

in order to procure a ſupper, or a bed! After putting an end to this combat between reſt and hunger, he lies down, and falls aſleep in the open air; and thus, ſeemingly abandoned by nature and by men, he enjoys the protection of the one, and deſpiſes that of the other. The citizen of Lyons, who diſdained Rouſſeau becauſe he was ill clothed, has died unknown; and the man in rags, has now altars erected to his memory.

Theſe examples ought to conſole men of genius, who have been reduced by fortune to a ſimilar condition, and who are obliged to ſtruggle againſt want.

Adverſity is calculated to form them; let them perſevere, and the ſame recompenſe awaits them.

Puritaniſm, with all its hideous auſterity, at one time reigned in the colony of Maſſachuſſet. It appears, from many circumſtances, however, that Franklin, even while a boy, knew how to appreciate this religious grimace.

As his father was accuſtomed to precede all his meals with long prayers, and even to ſay grace over every particular diſh, he was deſirous to correct this folly by means of the following ſally of wit:

Old Franklin, one day, at the beginning of winter, being buſied in ſalting proviſions; "Father," ſays his ſon, "you ought to aſk a bleſſing, once for all, "upon the whole caſk of proviſions, *as it would be* "*a wonderful ſaving of time!*"

Young Benjamin fully diſplayed his future character in the concluding obſervation, the principle of which formed the baſis of all his politics.

Franklin being perſuaded that knowledge could never ſpread, unleſs it had been firſt collected in a central point, as it were, was always extremely deſirous to encourage literary, and political clubs. In one of theſe clubs, founded by him, the following were the queſtions put to the candidate:

"Do you believe, that a man ought to be deſpiſed "or perſecuted for opinions merely ſpeculative, on "account of any particular faith that he may hap-"pen to profeſs?"

"Do you love truth, for its own ſake?"

"Will you employ all your efforts, in order to "know it yourſelf, and to inſtill it into others?"

---

* Having, during his reſidence in England, remarked the advantages reſulting from newſpapers, and aſſociations, known under the denomination of *Clubs*, and ſocieties formed on the baſis of a voluntary ſubſcription, Franklin propoſed to make them adopted by his native country.

He accordingly began by publiſhing a Gazette, the columns of which he filled up, during a ſcarcity of news, by means of eſſays of his own compoſition, in which the moral was generally preſented under the form of an apologue; in which reaſon was animated by gay but amiable pleaſantries; and in which philoſophy, without ceaſing to be within the comprehenſion of the ſimple coloniſts for whom it was deſtined, was on a level with the ideas of an European.

* Tranſlated from the "Eloge de Franklin," by the celebrated Condorcet.

It

It was a new Spectator, as it were, that he produced, but with much more nature, ſimplicity, and grace; with an aim more extended, and, above all, more uſeful.

Inſtead of the uncertain hope of correcting ſome few of the vices of a nation, corrupted by riches and inequality, he conceived a reaſonable expectation of rectifying the ideas, of depurating and poliſhing the virtues of a naſcent people.

Several of the fugitive pieces printed at that period by Franklin, have been preſerved; and there are ſome of them, which Voltaire and Monteſquieu would not have diſavowed.

He would never permit his journal to be diſgraced by *perſonalities*. This ſpecies of malice, which preſents the ready means of drawing down the popular vengeance upon thoſe whom an editor is inclined to hate, appeared to him to be equally hurtful and dangerous. It ſeemed to furniſh a perfidious kind of arms, which the hypocritical and the factious might uſe with addreſs, in order to provoke ſuſpicion againſt virtues and talents the moſt eminent; to render all reputations uncertain; to deſtroy character, and the authority of a good name, a circumſtance ſo neceſſary in an infant republic, and then deliver up the public confidence to thoſe obſcure and intriguing men who know how to ſurpriſe it.

The Americans were not then that enlightened people, who have ſince aſtoniſhed us by the wiſdom of their conſtitutions. Religion, and the inceſſant labour neceſſary to form eſtabliſhments in a wild and

ſavage country, had alone occupied the minds and the bodies of the firſt generations of Europeans.

Franklin perceived how much they ſtood in need of the light of philoſophy; but it was neceſſary to make them feel this, without announcing an intention, which would have but too plainly diſcovered his own ſuperiority.

He accordingly formed a club, compoſed of ſeveral of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, whoſe fortunes were on a level with his own. It conſiſted of only twelve perſons, and the number was never augmented. But in conſequence of his advice, the majority of the members eſtabliſhed ſimilar aſſociations; by this means, they all became animated with the ſame ſpirit; but he was careful not to connect them by a ſolemn confederation, and ſtill leſs by a dependence upon the mother ſociety.

It was his intention to form a more liberal communication of knowledge, and of ſentiments, among the citizens; to habituate them to the cuſtom of acting together in behalf of their common intereſts; and to enable them to propagate and diſperſe their opinions, without forming a party.

He thought that if a private aſſociation ought never to conceal itſelf, it ought ſtill leſs to exhibit itſelf to public view; that uſeful, while it acts by the ſeparate intereſts of its members, by the concert of their intentions, by the weight which their virtues or their talents give to their opinions, it might become dangerous, if, operating in a maſs, and forming in ſome reſpects a nation within a nation, it ſhould be at length

length able to oppoſe its own will to that of the people, and to place between individuals and the national power, a foreign force, which, directed by an ambitious man, might equally menace liberty and the laws *.

It is cuſtomary, in the Engliſh clubs, to ſubject all thoſe to a ſlight fine, who tranſgreſs their laws. In that of Philadelphia, a ſlight fine was levied every time an improper expreſſion was made uſe of.—Thoſe moſt obſtinate in the belief of their own *infallibility*, were obliged to make uſe of a certain diffidence in their aſſertions, and to adopt a degree of modeſt circumlocution, that prevented the ſelf-love of the company from being ſhocked by the powerful influence of words upon ideas,—this at length extended even to opinions †.

* This idea is perhaps adapted only to an eſtabliſhed commonwealth. What could France have oppoſed to the treachery of the Executive Power, ſave and except a club, to which (however unpopular it may now be) the empire is indebted for it, liberties?

† "1mo, To declare that the candidate had no animoſity "againſt any of the members of the aſſembly.

"2do, To profeſs an equal degree of love for all men, what-"ever might be their faith.

"3tio, To look upon every attempt againſt the independence "of religion, and of opinion, to be tyranny.

"4to, To love the truth for its own ſake—to take pleaſure in "extending and propagating it.

"This," ſays M. Condorcet, "was the profeſſion of faith "of a ſociety which rendered great ſervice to the Aſſembly of "Pennſylvania, without ever pretending to govern it."

In the mean time, Franklin began, in an adroit manner, to declare war againſt fanaticiſm, which of courſe muſt have taken deep root in a country peopled by perſecution. Thoſe ſentiments of univerſal benevolence, which ſo eaſily enter into mild and gentle minds; thoſe maxims of ſimple truth which good ſenſe never rejects, conduct, by little and little, to indulgence, and to reaſon; and at leaſt reduce to a ſtate incapable of doing them hurt, that enemy to mankind, which it would have been imprudent to have attacked in front.

Thus, at the very ſame epoch, in two different parts of the globe, philoſophy avenged humanity of the tyranny which had a long while oppreſſed and diſhonoured it; but it combated her with different weapons.

In the one, fanaticiſm was an error of individuals, and the unhappy conſequence of their education and their ſtudies; to enlighten them, it was ſufficient to diſſipate the phantoms of a wandering imagination. In fine, it was only the fanatics themſelves that it was neceſſary to cure.

In the other, where fanaticiſm, guided by politics, had founded upon error a ſyſtem of domination, and where, leagued with every ſpecies of tyranny, it had promiſed to blind mankind, provided it was permitted to oppreſs them, it became neceſſary to rear up againſt it the whole force of public opinion, and to oppoſe, to ſo dangerous a power, all the efforts of the friends of reaſon and of liberty. The buſineſs there, was not to enlighten the fanatics, but

to

to unmaſk and diſarm them. One might add to this parallel, new in the hiſtory of philoſophy, that Voltaire and Franklin, the two men who had ſeparately, but at one and the ſame time, conceived this ſalutary project, had the happineſs to meet, in their old age, at Paris—to enjoy their glory together, and congratulate each other upon their triumph.

The philoſopher, who prepared the felicity of his country by enlightening men, and forming them into citizens, was deſtined to render it ſervices ſtill more direct, and no leſs uſeful. The times were no longer ſuch, as when the poverty of the Engliſh colonies was ſufficient to prevent the wars of Europe from extending to them. They had already become ſufficiently flouriſhing to tempt the avidity of an enemy; and it was equally dangerous for their repoſe and their liberty, to be either abandoned by Great-Britain, or defended by its armies.

Dr. Franklin, who, ever ſince the year 1736, had acted as Secretary to the Aſſembly of Pennſylvania, thought that it would be proper to profit by a war in which England was ſo nearly intereſted, in order to teach the Pennſylvanians to aſſume, for the defence of the mother country, thoſe arms which would be one day neceſſary againſt herſelf, for the maintenance of their own rights; and accordingly, in 1744, he formed the plan of a national militia.

The people reliſhed the propoſal; Philadelphia alone furniſhed a thouſand men. The command was offered to Franklin; he refuſed it, and ſerved as a common ſoldier under Mr. Laurence, whom he himſelf

himſelf had propoſed as the fitteſt perſon to act as General.

It was neceſſary to build forts, and money was wanting; he provided the neceſſary ſums by means of a lottery, of which he himſelf formed the plan.

The ſucceſs of this meaſure was retarded for ſome time, by a very ſingular difficulty.

The Quakers form a very numerous body in Pennſylvania; and ſuch is the purity of the principles of that ſect, that they look upon it as criminal, to contribute money even in behalf of a defenſive war. The natural effect of an exaggerated morality, adopted by enthuſiaſm, is to place its ſectariſts under the neceſſity of either violating its precepts, or of ſacrificing the counſels of reaſon, and the dictates of judgment. At length they endeavour to elude their own laws; they diſſemble the violation of them by means of ſubtile diſtinctions, and by adroit and equivocal modes of reaſoning. By theſe means, they prevent the fanatics and hypocrites of their own ſect from riſing againſt them, and do not wound the feelings of the people, who, in all religions, attach their ideas of morality to certain conſecrated words *.

The

* It is thus that the Quakers, on being ſolicited for money in order to purchaſe gunpowder, preſented the ſum demanded, *under the pretence* of its being intended for corn. The Dunkars, more wiſe perhaps than the Quakers, have never committed their *dogmas* nor their precepts to writing. They were afraid, as one of their principal men told Dr. Franklin, of either expoſing themſelves to the danger of profeſſing that which they did not any longer believe, or to the ſhame of having changed their opinions.

CONDORCET.

The philoſophical indulgence of Dr. Franklin, and the addreſs which he made uſe of upon more than one occaſion, often enabled him to conciliate the patriotiſm of the Quakers with the principles of their ſect.

Never was any man more anxious to exhibit the moſt ſcrupulous reſpect for the religious weakneſſes and follies of other men; towards feeble and ſickly minds, he ever evinced the ſame delicate attentions, which worthy men generally make uſe of in regard to the infirmities of infancy.

The education of Dr. Franklin had not opened to him the career of the ſciences, but nature had given him a genius capable of comprehending, and even of embelliſhing them.

His firſt eſſays on electricity fully prove, that he was but very little acquainted with this part of natural philoſophy. Being at an immenſe diſtance from Europe, he poſſeſſed but imperfect machines. Notwithſtanding this diſadvantage, he ſoon diſcovered the immediate cauſe of electrical *phenomena*. He explained it, by demonſtrating the exiſtence of a fluid, inſenſible while it remains in a ſtate of equilibrium, and which inſtantly manifeſts itſelf, either when this equilibrium is deſtroyed, or while it endeavours to re-eſtabliſh it. His Analyſis of the grand Leyden experiment, is a *chef-d'œuvre* at once, of ſagacity, of perſpicacity, and of art.

Soon after this, he perceived an analogy between the effects of thunder and electricity, which ſtruck him prodigiouſly. He conceived the idea of an apparatus,

paratus, by means of which, he propoſed to interrogate the heavens; he makes the experiment, and the anſwer fully confirms his conjectures. Thus the cauſe of lightning is now known. Its effects, ſo ruinous, ſo irregular in appearance, are not only explained, but imitated.

We at length know why the lightning ſilently and peaceably follows certain bodies, and diſperſes others with a loud noiſe; why it melts metals, ſometimes ſhivers to atoms, and ſometimes ſeems to reſpect, thoſe ſubſtances which ſurround it.

But it was but little to imitate the thunder: Dr. Franklin conceived the audacious idea of averting its vengeance.

He imagined, that a bar of iron, pointed at the end, and connected with the ground, or rather with the water, would eſtabliſh a communication between a cloud and the earth, and thus guarantee or protect the objects in the immediate neighbourhood of ſuch a conductor.

The ſucceſs of this idea was fully commenſurate to all his wiſhes; and thus man was enabled to wield a power ſufficient to diſarm the wrath of Heaven.

This great diſcovery was by far too brilliant, and too ſingular, not to conjure up a numerous hoſt of enemies againſt it. Notwithſtanding this, the cuſtom of uſing conductors was adopted in America and in Great Britain; but at the commencement of war with the mother-country, the Engliſh philoſophers endeavoured, by unfair experiments, to throw doubts upon the utility of his ſcheme, and ſeemed to indi-

cate

cate a wiſh to raviſh this diſcovery from Benjamin Franklin, by way of puniſhing him for the loſs of thirteen colonies.

It is unfortunately more eaſy to miſlead a nation in regard to its proper intereſts, than to impoſe upon men of ſcience relative to an experiment; thus thoſe prejudices, which were able to draw England into an unjuſt and fatal conteſt, could not make the learned of Europe, change the form of the electrical conductors. They multiplied in France, after France had become allied to America; in truth, the ſentence of the police has been oppoſed to it in ſome of our towns, as it has been oppoſed in Italy by the deciſions of caſuiſts, and with juſt as little ſucceſs!

In a free country, the law follows the public opinion; in deſpotic governments, the public opinion often contradicts the laws, but always concludes at length by ſubmitting itſelf to their influence.—At this day, the uſe of this preſervative has become common among almoſt all nations, but without being univerſally adopted. A long courſe of experiments does not permit us any longer to doubt of its efficacy.

If the edifices provided with it, have ſtill ſome dangers to dread, this happens, becauſe, between the bounded efforts of man, and the boundleſs force of nature, there can never be eſtabliſhed any other, but an unequal conteſt.

But what an immenſe career has this ſucceſsful experiment opened to our hopes?

Why may we not one day hope to ſee the baneful activity of all the ſcourges of mankind melt away,

as that of thunder has done, before the powers of genius, exerciſed through immenſity of ages; when all the regions of nature are diſarmed by the happy uſe of her gifts, we ſhall experience nothing but her benefits?

In 1754, the King of England, who had formed the project of attacking France, convoked a general congreſs of the deputies of the different colonies, in order to concert a ſyſtem of common defence. Dr. Franklin was ſent thither, and propoſed a plan, which was accepted by the Congreſs; but it was neither agreeable to the aſſemblies of the particular States, nor to the Britiſh miniſtry. No menace had as yet made the colonies perceive the neceſſity of this union, which was about to take away from each a part of its independence; and the Engliſh government was at one and the ſame time too cunning not to foreſee that this new inſtitution prepared a reſiſtance to its tyrannical enterpriſes, and was too little enlightened to know, that nothing remained for it but to direct a revolution, which was an inevitable conſequence of the increaſing proſperity of the colonies. Indolence or pride on one ſide, and perfidy on the other, occaſioned the rejection of a ſcheme formed by foreſight and traced by wiſdom.

Twenty-four years afterwards, it ſerved as a baſis to that Congreſs which declared the independence of the United States; and perhaps it would have been a *deſideratum* in the new conſtitution, to have imitated more its ſage ſimplicity.

It has been urged as a reproach to Franklin, that he had given a *negative* to the governor appointed by

the King of Great Britain; but circumſtances required this ſacrifice; it was the band that would have connected a ſucker, at that time young and tender, to the parent tree, from which it had ſprouted forth; and which ought not to have been cut until the moment that the young plant, after having extended its roots, and developed its branches, had acquired ſufficient vigour to nouriſh it by means of its own proper ſtrength.

While he remained in England, in quality of agent for the American provinces, the miniſters ſometimes deigned to conſult him. They affected, however, to regard all thoſe who happened not to be of their way of thinking, as enemies to Great Britain. This was no other than announcing, that they wiſhed to be deceived; and the governors of the colonies underſtood this but too well.

Notwithſtanding this, Franklin, faithful to his principles, continued alone to tell the truth. Therefore, not content with taking away from him a place which he held in America *, and to which they had no longer the power to appoint a ſucceſſor, they ſtopped the arrears of his ſalary, and at laſt commenced a proſecution againſt him.

Theſe proceſſes, in a free country, are the *lettres de cachet* of its miniſters; and it is in this manner that, a few years before, they found means to be avenged of

* The office of Poſt Maſter General for the Southern Department. TRANS.

Mr.

Mr. Wilkes *. The preſent, however, was not attended with any diſagreeable circumſtances; they could not find a pretext in any exiſting law for condemning him; and the miniſterial vengeance was obliged to be content with the outrages of a lawyer, whoſe complaiſance has ſince been recompenſed by a peerage †.

At the epoch when Franklin was ſent to France, this country did not poſſeſs a free conſtitution; but the French could not be properly termed ſlaves. If the people groaned beneath an arbitrary government, and ſtill more under the yoke of bad laws, *their ſouls were not ſubjugated*, for their minds ſtill preſerved their independence.

It did not reſemble a nation where there does not exiſt but a deſpot, a treaſury, and an army; it was not indifferent that a war was conformable or contrary to the national will, for the French were already thought worthy of being conſulted; their mi-

* The intereſt which miniſters have in preſerving the means of indirect oppreſſion, is one of the principal obſtacles to the perfection of the laws of England.

Criminal laws, which are vague, or which enact penalties againſt actions innocent in themſelves, civil laws, obſcure in their nature, and explained by tribunals which either by their conſtitution, or their want of independence, are not altogether unexpoſed to influence, are ſo many inſtruments, which either indolence or corruption, leave too often in the hands of deſpotiſm. Every nation that wiſhes to remain free, ought to haſten to ſnatch that odious power from the hands that wield it. CONDORCET.

† M. Condorcet ſeems to be miſtaken in this particular; a proceſs was indeed threatened, but it was never commenced. TRANS.

niſters

niſters following the policy adopted among free nations, before they commenced a war, waited until it was ſolicited by the voice of the people.

As a negotiator, Franklin obſerved much, but did little.

He wiſely left to the miniſters of the allied powers, to decide on the manner of attacking England and ſuccouring America, for fear leſt the bad ſucceſs of any meaſure imputed to his counſels, or to his demands, ſhould cool their zeal.

It was in order to maintain in France an idea of the conſtancy and reſources of America, and to ſupport that enthuſiaſm created by himſelf, that he employed all his pains and attention, until, perceiving the approaching diſgrace of the Engliſh miniſtry, who had commenced and carried on the war, he foreſaw that his native country was about to be declared independent.

He beheld the auſpicious moment at length arrive; and ſigned, with a tranquil hand, that treaty which aſſured the freedom and the glory of America; he had ever contemplated, with a firm eye, her dangers and her ſufferings.

This calmneſs of mind did not proceed from indifference; it was the reſult of a ſincere conviction, that the independence of America was to be bought at a larger or a ſmaller price, and recogniſed ſome years ſooner or later—but that it could never be in danger of being loſt.

Theſe were the reflections of a man, who knew that the moral is ſubjected, like the natural world, to certain laws; and who anticipated, in theſe immu-

table decrees, the triumph of his country. They alſo proceeded from the abſence of every perſonal conſideration; for this corrupting influence often ſullies the love of liberty, by thoſe anxieties, thoſe fears, thoſe furious impulſes which degrade, by rendering it but too ſimilar to the baſe paſſions ariſing from intereſt and vanity. The patriotiſm of Franklin was, as it ought to be, calm, like that of Socrates and of Phocion, whom the orators ſold to the purpoſes of a faction, or paid by tyrants, accuſed of not loving their country enough.

France, during the progreſs of this war, had preſented him with a ſpectacle worthy of intereſting his prying genius.

He had beheld the opinions which had been condemned in the works of philoſophers, adopted and eſtabliſhed in manifeſtoes; a people tranquil amidſt its ancient chains, intoxicated with the pleaſure of breaking thoſe of another hemiſphere; republican principles openly profeſſed under an arbitrary government; the rights of men violated by the laws, and by authority of the magiſtrates, but proved and eſtabliſhed in books; political knowledge, worthy of the moſt enlightened age, and the wiſeſt nation, ſhining amidſt a crowd of abſurd and barbarous inſtitutions; a people applauding the maxims of liberty in the theatres, but yet obedient to the maxims of ſlavery; free in their ſentiments, in their opinions, in their converſation, and appearing to behold, with extreme indifference, actions obliged to ſubmit to the very laws which they deſpiſed.

It

It was eaſy for him to foreſee, that a nation, already ſo worthy of liberty, would ſoon be able to reconquer it; and that the revolution of France, like that of America, was one of the events which human knowledge might ſubtract from the empire of reaſon, and of the paſſions *.

---

† On his arrival in France, Franklin announced himſelf as a philoſopher, who, afflicted with the troubles of his country, and averting his eyes from ſo many objects of deſolation, had come to Europe on purpoſe to find an aſylum.

He at firſt lodged in a village at the gates of Paris, and on the road to Verſailles. He ſoon after hired a houſe at Paſſy; in this retreat, he ſaw but little company, and remained conſtantly upon his guard.

He uſed to whiſper, that the hatred of the Engliſh miniſtry conſtantly expoſed him to the greateſt dangers—and this idea alone rendered him more intereſting.

Franklin never entered the metropolis, unleſs accompanied by a numerous train, among whom were many men of genius, who, although neglected or perſecuted by their countrymen, nevertheleſs reflected a luſtre upon this foreigner, whom they honoured with their eſteem,

* Dr. Franklin, while in France, ſaid one day, in a public company, "you perceive liberty eſtabliſh herſelf, and flouriſh al-"moſt under your very eyes; I dare to predict that, by and by, "you will be anxious to taſte her bleſſings." CONDORCET.

† From Helliard d'Auberteuil.

Every thing about him announced that ſimplicity of manners, which the authors and philoſophers of antiquity have ſo well deſcribed, and which unfortunately have perhaps never been ſo perfect as in their deſcriptions.

He had thrown away the wig which in England had concealed the baldneſs of his forehead; and baniſhed all that uſeleſs parade of dreſs, which could only have placed him upon a level with the reſt of his countrymen.

He exhibited, to the aſtoniſhed multitude, a head worthy of the pencil of Guido, who excelled in the portraits of old men; his body was ſtraight and vigorous, and covered with the moſt ſimple drapery.—His eyes were ſhaded by a large pair of ſpectacles, and in his hand he wielded a white wand.

He ſpoke but little; he knew how to be unpolite, without being rude; and his pride ſeemed to be that of nature.

Such a perſonage was admirably calculated to excite the curioſity of Paris. The people aſſembled wherever he intended to paſs; they demanded of each other "Who is that aged peaſant, with ſo "noble an aſpect?"—and replied, with emulation, "It is the celebrated Franklin!"

He repaired to all the places where men uſually aſſociate for amiable, or uſeful, or humane purpoſes; and his arrival was always announced with plaudits.

He was to be ſeen at the public meetings of the Academy of Sciences, and the French Academy; at the audiences of the Parliament, at the exhibition of

the

the pictures in the academy of painting and ſculpture; at the free ſociety of emulation for the encouragement to uſeful arts; and in thoſe haunts, guarded with ſecrecy, where Peace and Liberty aſſembled, which had been frequented by Helvetius and Voltaire, and where he was worthy of preſiding along with them.

Never was any man ſo much honoured, without exciting envy; for every time that his name happened to be quoted, it was always the cuſtom to add, "He "is a moſt reſpectable gentleman." In three months after his arrival at Paris, his portrait was engraved, and to be ſeen every-where.

In the mean time, the cabinet of London could not be perſuaded that France and Spain were about to intereſt themſelves in favour of America. "The "French colonies," ſaid Lord George Germaine in the Houſe of Commons, "are perhaps ſtill more "diſcontented than our own:—Is it then to be "believed, that the Court of Verſailles would dare "to encourage a rebellion in their neighbourhood? "Will it not be afraid, leſt its own iſlands, in the "Weſt-Indies, ſhould be tempted to participate in "the unlimited rights of liberty?

"Will not thoſe of Spain find a commerce with all "nations infinitely more advantageous than with the "Biſcay company; and the excluſive enjoyment of "their own treaſures, infinitely more agreeable, than, "as now, to be obliged to dig their mines for an "European monarch?

" The neighbourhood of a large independent ſtate, " would always afford a perpetual ſubject of uneaſi- " neſs to France and Spain; and theſe Courts can- " not be ſo blind to their own proper intereſts, as to " ſupport America."

After ſome preliminary propoſitions, Conrad Gerard, authoriſed by a ſpecial commiſſion from the King of the French, dated Jan. 30th, 1778, and Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, on the part of the Congreſs, ſigned at Paris, on the 6th of February following, a treaty of friendſhip and commerce between the Crown of France, and the United States of America. Theſe plenipotentiaries, at the ſame time, inſiſted on obtaining an alliance offenſive and defenſive, by which Louis XVI. was to engage, not only purely and ſimply to recogniſe the independence of the United States, but alſo to guarantee and to defend them: This was refuſed by the French cabinet.

The King might readily acknowledge the independence of the colonies as an evident political fact, but he did not chooſe to make himſelf an umpire; he could not conſequently either guarantee, or undertake a war, in order to ſupport it.

Nevertheleſs, as the court of London appeared to have conceived a deſign of attacking France, the King thought proper to enter into an eventual, but purely defenſive alliance with the commonwealth of America.

It

It was agreed, in conſequence of this, *that if war ſhould be declared between France and Great Britain, during the preſent hoſtilities between the United States and England*, his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty and the United States ſhould make a common cauſe of it, and mutually aid each other with their counſels and their forces, according to the neceſſity of circumſtances, as is uſual between good and faithful allies.

It was alſo declared, by article II. That the eſſential and direct object of the alliance was efficaciouſly to maintain the liberty, ſovereignty, and abſolute and unlimited independence of the United States, as well in what related to commerce, as government. In ſhort, the King engaged, in caſe war ſhould be declared between France and England, never to lay down his arms, until after the independence and the ſovereignty of the United States of America ſhould be recogniſed by Great Britain.

This alliance did not prevent the colonies from treating with England without the conſent of France, as long as hoſtilities were confined to them; and it left the King and Parliament of Great Britain abſolute maſters of either peace or war.

It never acquired any reality, until the commencement of hoſtilities on the part of his Britannic Majeſty, who ordered Pondicherry to be beſieged, even before the treaty in queſtion was concluded.

It remained, indeed, a profound ſecret, becauſe, being proviſional, it was then of no real value whatever; but the treaty of commerce was notified to the Court of London, by the Count de Noailles, Am-

Ambaſſador from France, on the 13th of March 1775.

On that very evening, Lord North declared in Parliament, that he regarded a war with France as inevitable.

Dr. Franklin, at length, had an interview with his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty; he was preſented to him, in the gallery of Verſailles, by the Count de Vergennes, Miniſter for foreign affairs. On this occaſion, he was accompanied and followed by a great number of Americans, and individuals of foreign ſtates, who were collected together by curioſity. His age, his venerable appearance, the ſimplicity of his dreſs on ſuch an occaſion, every thing that was either ſingular or reſpectable in the life of this American, contributed to augment the public attention. Clapping of hands, and a variety of other demonſtrations of joy, announced that warmth of affection, of which the French are more ſuſceptible than any other people, and of which their politeneſs and civility augments the charm to him who is the object of it.

His Majeſty addreſſed him as follows:

"You may aſſure the United States of America of "my friendſhip; I beg leave alſo to obſerve, that I "am exceedingly ſatisfied in particular with your "own conduct, during your reſidence in my king-"dom." When the new Ambaſſador, after this audience, croſſed the Court, in order to repair to the office of the miniſter of foreign affairs, the multitude waited for him in the paſſage, and hailed him with their acclamations.

At

At the moment that this illuſtrious philoſopher was received in this manner in Europe, the ſpirit of diviſion was introduced among the people of America. General Waſhington began to be reproached for never having come off victorious in any pitched battle he had fought. The Court of London had emiſſaries in its pay, who, with an appearance of zeal in the cauſe of America, endeavoured to ruin it, by fermenting the diſſenſions that took place between the chief perſons in the legiſlature, and the leaders of the army. Some men, the ſecret enemies of France, endeavoured to inſpire the people with diſtruſt to government, and with a hatred to the individuals of the nation. Several adventurers, who pretended to be officers in the ſervice of his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, had, by means of their diſorderly and improper conduct, but too much favoured the prejudices conceived againſt their countrymen.

They alſo endeavoured to throw doubts upon the ſucceſs of Dr. Franklin's miſſion; the Congreſs actually refuſed to employ ſome individuals ſelected from our beſt troops; they even expected but little trade with France, either on account of paſt experience in buſineſs, or ſome other reaſons not eaſily ſpecified; for, in a country, of which commerce is the life, and which holds up as the firſt claſs of citizens, all thoſe that practiſe it with ſucceſs, frankneſs and good faith form the baſis of negotiations; whereas, among thoſe nations in which commerce does not attract the public attention, the merchant

neceſſarily becomes a man full of tricks, and deſpicable manœuvres. The trade of monarchies is propagated with great difficulty throughout the world, whereas, on the contrary, in all ages, commerce has become tributary to republics, and even to thoſe the ſoil of which affords them but little or nothing to exchange.

At length, the Court of England reſolved to ſend Commiſſioners to America, provided with extenſive powers, in order to offer peace to the colonies, and to re-eſtabliſh an union on the ſame baſis as it had exiſted in 1763.

The treaty with France had been concluded on the 6th of February, and the conciliatory bills did not paſs the Britiſh Parliament until the 16th of the ſame month; but the miniſtry hoped, that if their Ambaſſadors ſet off inſtantly, they would arrive in ſufficient time to divide the ſentiments of the people, and even to prevent the Congreſs from ratifying the engagement entered into at Paris with its Plenipotentiaries. Lord Carliſle, a man of gentle manners, and ſome parts; Mr. (afterwards Commodore) Johnſtone, formerly Governor of Florida, who was beloved in America on account of his candour, his knowledge, and his humanity; and William Eden, a man of conſiderable capacity; were entruſted with this delicate miſſion. Several of the Engliſh had actually perſuaded themſelves that the Congreſs uſurped the authority which they exerciſed over the people, and knowing that the declaration of Independence had not paſſed by an unanimous vote, they thought

thought that it would be eaſy to gain over a ſufficient number of the members of the Aſſembly, in order to procure a majority.

The cabinet of St. James's had alſo ſent its emiſſaries to Paris, to treat with Dr. Franklin, and endeavour either to deceive, or betray him.

But it was now too late to open a negotiation, for Silas Deane had left the capital of France, in order to embark at Toulon on board the fleet commanded by Count d'Eſtaing, and M. Gerard was to proceed to America, on the ſame occaſion, in quality of Miniſter Plenipotentiary.

The Court of London, notwithſtanding theſe conciliatory bills, did not recall its armies; on the contrary, it included Lord and General Howe among the Commiſſioners, and there was every reaſon to believe, that neither the King, nor his miniſters, ever ſeriouſly intended to negotiate fairly with the Americans, but wiſhed merely to engage them to break the treaty which they had concluded with France, and to gain over ſome of the members of the Congreſs to their views. Perhaps they reſolved firſt, if poſſible, to make them loſe their new allies, and then to reduce them to the vileſt ſlavery.

After having achieved his great work, a peace, which gave liberty and independence to his country, Dr. Franklin led rather a ſolitary life during his retreat at Paſſy. A ſmall circle of ſociety, a few friends, and buſineſs that required but little labour; theſe

theſe furniſhed occupations for the evening of a ſerene life. But a grievous infirmity at length troubled his happineſs; from that moment, his inclinations were turned towards America, and he accordingly departed from France, to which, by way of recompenſe for its ſervices, he left a great example, and leſſons that could not remain long without their proper uſe. Soon after his arrival in the Iſle of Wight, he embarked, once more, for his native country; he was accompanied to Great Britain by M. le Veillard, who, during his reſidence at Paſſy, had conſtantly exhibited towards him a degree of attention and reſpect, which filial affection could alone rival. The American philoſopher hardly touched Engliſh ground with his feet, for he had the generoſity to ſpare, to his humbled enemies, the mortification of beholding his glory. If, on one hand, he beheld the French as friends, the Engliſh appeared, on the other, to be relations, in regard to whom he ought to reſpect the ties of nature, even although their own injuſtice had violated them.

His entry into Philadelphia reſembled a triumph; and he traverſed the ſtreets of that capital, amidſt the benedictions of a free and grateful people, who had not forgotten his ſervices.

The warriors, who had ſhed their blood for an independence, inſured by means of his ſagacity, were eager to exhibit to him their glorious wounds. He was ſurrounded by old men, who had petitioned Heaven to live long enough in order to behold his return, and by a new generation, eager to ſurvey the features

tures of a great man, whoſe talents, whoſe ſervices, and whoſe virtues, had excited in their hearts the firſt raptures of enthuſiaſm. Having advanced from a port henceforth open to all nations, to a city, the model of all future capitals, he beheld the public ſchool which he had founded, in a ſtate of ſplendour; and ſaw the hoſpital, the eſtabliſhment of which had been one of his firſt ſervices, and the increaſe of which was owing to his foreſight, now fully commenſurate to all his wiſhes, by ſolacing ſuffering humanity, and by aiding the progreſs of reaſon. He then turned his eyes towards the neighbouring country, embelliſhed by liberty, in which, in the midſt of public proſperity, were ſtill to be ſeen ſome veſtiges of the ravages of the Engliſh; but theſe only ſerved, by their contraſt, to endear, ſtill more, the pleaſures ariſing from peace and victory.

---

* CHARACTER OF DR. FRANKLIN.

Humanity and frankneſs were the baſis of his morality. A habitual gaiety, a happy facility in regard to every thing reſpecting the common concerns of life, and a tranquil inflexibility in affairs of importance, formed the character of Dr. Franklin.—Theſe two latter qualities are eaſily united in men, who, endowed with a ſuperior mind, and ſtrong underſtanding, abandon trifling things to doubt and to indifference.

His ſyſtem of conduct was ſimple; he endeavoured to baniſh ſorrow and weariſomneſs, by means of

* By M. Condorcet

temperance

temperance and labour. "Happineſs," he was uſed to ſay, "like a body, is compoſed of inſen-"ſible elements."

Without diſdaining glory, he knew how to deſpiſe the injuſtice of opinion; and while enjoying renown, he could pardon envy.

During his youth, he had carried his *pyrrhoniſm* to the very foundations of morality; the natural goodneſs of his heart, and the directions of his conſcience, were his ſole guides; and they very rarely led him aſtray.

A little later in life, he allowed that there exiſted a morality founded upon the nature of man, independent of all ſpeculative opinions, and anterior to all conventions.

He thought, that our ſouls, in another life, received the recompenſe of their virtues, and the puniſhment of their faults; he believed in the exiſtence of a God, at once beneficent and juſt, to whom he offered up, in the ſecrecy of his own conſcience, a ſilent, but pure homage.

He did not deſpiſe the exterior forms of religion; he even thought them uſeful to morality; he, however, ſubmitted himſelf to them but ſeldom.

All religions appeared to him to be equally good, provided an univerſal toleration was the principle of them, and that they did not deprive, of the recompenſe due to virtue, thoſe who were of another belief, or of no belief at all.

The application of the ſciences to the common purpoſes of life, and to domeſtic œconomy, was

often

often the ſubject of his reſearches; he took pleaſure to demonſtrate, that, even in the moſt common affairs of life, cuſtom and ignorance are but bad guides; that we were far from having exhauſted the reſources of nature; and were only deficient in men capable of interrogating her *.

He never wrote any thing upon politics, except ſome tracts required by circumſtances, and produced upon the ſpur of the occaſion.

It was eaſy to perceive, that he always endeavoured to reduce all queſtions to their ſimple elements, and to preſent them in ſuch a manner to the public, that the unlearned might be enabled to underſtand, and to reſolve them. It was to ſuch that he always addreſſed himſelf. Sometimes it was an error that he attempted to root out and deſtroy; and ſometimes an uſeful truth, for which he wiſhed gently to prepare their minds, that at length they might be enabled to receive, and, above all, to preſerve it. It is in vain that we ſhall ſearch for any ſubject, on which he could be ſuppoſed to have written from the mere impulſe of glory.

* He was occupied a long time, in endeavouring to make the forms of chimnies more perfect, and to introduce œconomy in regard to combuſtible ſubſtances, by regulating the intenſity and the equality of heat, and the renewal of the air in places warmed artificially. Several years before he became ſo celebrated as he afterwards was, and at the period when he began to enjoy an independent fortune, it was propoſed to him to procure a patent for a ſtove of his own invention. This he rejected; ſaying, at the ſame time, "I have profited by the inventions of others, and "is it not juſt that they, in return, ſhould profit by mine?"

Sometimes

Sometimes he employed thoſe forms, which, in appearance only, diſguiſe the truth, in order to render it more affecting, and which, inſtead of diſcloſing, allow the pleaſure of divining it.

It was thus that, while ſeeming to teach the ſureſt means for diminiſhing the extent of a ſtate, which is found too difficult to be governed, he lampooned the conduct of the Engliſh miniſtry in regard to America; thus, alſo, by way of diſplaying the injuſtice of the pretenſions of Great Britain in regard to her colonies, he ſuppoſes the King of Pruſſia to publiſh a proclamation, in which he ſubjugates England to the payment of certain taxes, under pretext that the inhabitants of the banks of the Oder had formerly conquered and peopled it.

His converſation, like his ſtyle, was always natural, and often ingenious. In his youth, he had read Xenophon, an author who had inſpired him with a taſte for the Socratic method of argument,—and he took pleaſure in employing it, ſometimes by putting artful queſtions, tending to make the advocates of a falſe opinion refute themſelves; ſometimes, by an application of their principles to other events, obliging them thus to recogniſe the truth, when diſengaged from the clouds within which cuſtom or prejudice had enveloped it; at other times, deciding by means of an apologue, a tale, or an anecdote, thoſe queſtions which the pride of a ſerious diſcuſſion would have obſcured.

Being employed by ſome of the American provinces, to requeſt an abolition of the inſulting cuſtom

of

of tranſporting malefactors to the colonies, the miniſter, by way of reply, alleged the neceſſity of delivering England of ſuch vermin.

"What would you ſay to us," rejoined he, "if "we were to export our rattleſnakes?"

Dr. Franklin had never formed a general ſyſtem of politics: He examined the queſtions exactly as the events preſented themſelves to his obſervation, or as his foreſight anticipated them; and he decided them all according to the ſtandard of thoſe principles which originate in a virtuous mind, and in a judgment at once juſt and comprehenſive.

In general, he appeared not fond of giving all at once the greateſt poſſible degree of perfection to human inſtitutions; he thought it a more certain way to wait for the effects of time. He was not fond of attacking abuſes in front; he thought it more prudent firſt to attack thoſe errors which are the ſource of them.

He had in politics, as in morals, that kind of indulgence which requires but little, becauſe it hopes much, and which forgets, and even pardons the preſent, in favour of the future. He always propoſed thoſe meaſures which ſeemed to him to be moſt proper in order to preſerve peace; becauſe he was not fond of delivering up the happineſs of mankind to the uncertainty of events, nor truth to the inte
of a party.

He preferred the good obtained by r
which might be expected from enth

it is more eaſy to be procured, and infinitely more laſting.

In one word, his politics were thoſe of a man who believed in the power of reaſon and the reality of virtue, and who aſpired to be the teacher of his fellow-citizens before he became their legiſlator.

---

* At the name of Franklin, every thing intereſting to virtue, freedom, and humanity, riſes to our recollection! By what eulogium ſhall we do juſtice to his pre-eminent abilities and worth? This would require a pre-eminence of abilities and worth like his own.

His original and univerſal genius was capable of the *greateſt* things, but diſdained not the *ſmalleſt*, provided they were uſeful. With equal eaſe and abilities he could conduct the affairs of a printing-preſs, and of a great nation, and diſcharge the duties of a public miniſter of ſtate, or the private executor of a will.

Franklin, as a philoſopher, might have become a Newton; as a lawgiver, a Lycurgus; but he was greater than either of them, by uniting the talents of both in the practical philoſophy of doing good, compared to which all the palms of ſpeculative wiſdom and ſcience wither on the ſight. He did not ſeek to derive his

* from Dr. Smith's Eulogium on Benjamin Frank- delivered March 1, 1791, before the Congreſs, Philoſophical Society of Philadelphia.

eminence

eminence from the mere profeſſion of letters, which, although laborious, ſeldom elevates a man to any high rank in the public confidence and eſteem; but he became great by applying his abilities to things uſeful, and accommodating his inſtructions to the exigencies of the times, and the neceſſities of his country.

Had we no other proof of this, the great and dignified part which he ſuſtained in the American Revolution, one of the moſt important events recorded in the annals of mankind, would have been alone ſufficient to immortalize his name; but when we take into the account his previous labours for half a century, on purpoſe to illuminate the minds of his fellow-citizens, to prepare them for the mighty event, to nurſe them into greatneſs by the arts of induſtry and virtue, to ſhew them the happineſs which lay within their reach, to teach them to dare, and to bear, and to improve ſucceſs;—this accumulation of ſervices has woven for his head a diadem of ſuch beauty, as ſcarcely ever adorned the brow of either ancient or modern worthy.

In the earlieſt ſtages of life he had conceived the mighty idea of American glory and empire; but, like Hercules in the cradle, he was ignorant of his own ſtrength, and had not conceived the achievements and the labours that awaited him. He had not yet conceived that he was one day to contend with kings and potentates for the rights of his country, to extort from them an acknowledgment of its ſovereignty, and to ſubſcribe with his name the

ſacred inſtruments which were to give it a pre-eminent rank among the nations of the earth, and to aſſure its liberty and independence to the lateſt ages!

Virtus vera nobilitas *, was an adage with which he was well pleaſed. He conſidered a deſcent from any of the virtuous peaſantry and venerable yeomanry of America, who firſt ſubdued the ſturdy oaks of our foreſts, and aſſiſted to introduce culture and civilization into a once untutored land, as having more true nobility in it, than a pedigree which might be traced through the longeſt line of thoſe commonly called great and noble in this world. He roſe from low beginnings, and advanced not only himſelf but his country by means of the preſs. The preſs was the great inſtrument he made uſe of in order to draw the attention of Pennſylvania to habits of virtue and induſtry; to the inſtitution of ſocieties for the promotion of agriculture, commerce, and the mechanic arts; to the founding of ſchools, libraries, and hoſpitals, for the diffuſion of uſeful knowledge and the advancement of humanity: When you conſider this, you will go and do likewiſe †; you will, with profeſſional joy and pride, obſerve, that from the torch which Franklin kindled by means of his preſs, in the new world, "ſparks are already ſtolen "which are lighting up the ſacred flame of liberty, "virtue, and wiſdom, over the entire face of the

* Virtue is true nobility.

† This part was addreſſed to the printers of Philadelphia, who attended in a body.

"globe."

globe." Be it your part to feed that torch by means of the preſs until its divine flame reach the ſkies.

For the purpoſe of aiding his preſs, and increaſing the materials of information, one of the firſt ſocieties in America was formed by Dr. Franklin in the year 1728, about the twenty-ſecond year of his age, and was called the Junto. The number was limited to twelve members, who were bound together in all the ties of friendſhip, and engaged to aſſiſt each other not only in mutual communications of knowledge, but in all their worldly undertakings. This ſociety, after having ſubſiſted forty years, and having contributed to the formation of ſome very great men, beſides Dr. Franklin himſelf, became at laſt the foundation of the *American Philoſophical Society*, now aſſembled to pay the debt of gratitude to his memory. Many of the queſtions diſcuſſed by the members are curious; the following are a few of them:

"Is ſound an entity or a body?"

"How may the phænomena of vapours be ex-
"plained?"

"Is ſelf-intereſt (the rudder that ſteers mankind)
"the univerſal monarch to whom all are tribu-
"taries?"

"Which is the beſt form of government, and
"what was that form which firſt prevailed
"among mankind?"

"What is the reaſon that the tides riſe higher in
"the bay of Fundy, than in the bay of De-
"laware?"

" Is the emiſſion of paper money ſafe?"

" What is the reaſon that men of the greateſt " knowledge are not the moſt happy?"

" How may the poſſeſſion of the lakes be improved " to our advantage?"

" Why are tumultuous, uneaſy ſenſations united " with our deſires?"

" Whether it ought to be the aim of philoſophy " to eradicate the paſſions?"

" How may ſmoky chimnies be beſt cured?"

" Why does the flame of a candle tend upwards " in a ſpire?"

" Which is the leaſt criminal, A *bad* action joined " with a *good* intention, or a *good* action with " a *bad* intention?"

" Is it conſiſtent with the principles of liberty in a " free government to puniſh a man as a libeller " when he ſpeaks the truth?" &c. &c.

But Dr. Franklin did not reſt ſatisfied with the inſtitution of this literary club, for the improvement of himſelf and a few of his ſelect friends. He proceeded year after year in the projecting and eſtabliſhing other inſtitutions for the benefit of the community at large. Thus, in 1731, he ſet on foot the " Library Company of the city of Philadelphia," a moſt important inſtitution to all ranks of people, giving them acceſs, at a ſmall expence, to books on every uſeful ſubject, amounting in the whole to near ten thouſand volumes, and the number is daily increaſing.

After

After the eſtabliſhment of this company, its founder ſtill proceeded to promote other eſtabliſhments and aſſociations; ſuch as fire companies, the nightly watch for the city of Philadelphia, a plan for cleanſing, lighting, and ornamenting the ſtreets, and an aſſociation for inſuring houſes damaged by fire; to which, as collateral, he ſoon after added his plan for improving chimnies and fire-places, which gave riſe to the open ſtoves now in general uſe, to the comfort of thouſands who aſſemble round them in the wintry nights, and bleſs the inventor's name which they yet bear.

The next inſtitution, in the foundation of which he was the principal agent, was the Academy and Charitable School of the city of Philadelphia, the plan of which he drew up and publiſhed in the year 1749.

The Pennſylvania Hoſpital is alſo a monument of his philanthropy and public ſpirit, for the eſtabliſhment and endowment of which he was happily inſtrumental in obtaining a legiſlative ſanction and grant, by his great influence in the General Aſſembly in the year 1752.

Theſe various inſtitutions, which do ſo much honour to Pennſylvania, he projected, and ſaw completed during the firſt twenty years of his reſidence in this ſtate.

A life ſo aſſiduouſly employed in deviſing and executing ſchemes for the public good could not fail to aid him in his political career. He firſt became

clerk of the General Aſſembly, and then a member of the ſame for the city of Philadelphia, during the ſpace of fourteen years ſucceſſively. In 1744, a Spaniſh privateer having entered the bay of Delaware, aſcended as high as Newcaſtle, to the great terror of the citizens of Philadelphia. On the occaſion of this alarm he wrote his firſt political pamphlet, called "Plain Truth," to exhort his fellow-citizens to the bearing of arms, which laid the foundation of thoſe military aſſociations which followed at different times for the defence of the country.

Endowed with a penetrating and inquiſitive genius, ſpeculative and philoſophical ſubjects engaged his early attention; but he loved them only as they were uſeful, and purſued them no farther than as he found his reſearches applicable to ſome ſubſtantial purpoſe in life. His ſtock of knowledge, and the fruits of his inveſtigations, he never hoarded up for his own private uſe; whatever he diſcovered, whatever he conſidered as beneficial to mankind, freſh as it was conceived, or brought forth in his own mind, he communicated to his fellow-citizens by means of his newſpapers, and almanacks, in delicate and palatable morſels for the advancement of induſtry, frugality, and other republican virtues; and at a future day, as occaſion might require, he would collect and digeſt the parts, and ſet out the whole into one rich feaſt of uſeful maxims and practical wiſdom. Of this kind is his celebrated addreſs, entitled, "The "Way to Wealth," which is a collection, or a digeſt, of the various ſentences, proverbs, and wiſe maxims,

which,

which, during a courſe of many years, he had occaſionally publiſhed in his "Poor Richard's Almanack," on topics of induſtry, frugality, and the duty of *minding one's own buſineſs*. Had he never written any thing more than this admirable addreſs, it would have inſured him immortality; he, beſides this, publiſhed "The Farmer's Philoſopher," "The Rural Sage," and "The Yeoman's and Peaſant's Oracle."

But greater things lay before him, although, as a philoſopher as well as a politician, he remained unconſcious of the plenitude of his own ſtrength and talents, until called into further exertions by the magnitude of future objects and occaſions.

From the beginning of the year 1746, till about twenty years afterwards, was the æra of electricity; no other branch of natural philoſophy was ſo much cultivated during that period. In America and in the mind of Franklin it found a rich bed; the ſeed took root, and ſprung into a great tree, before he knew that ſimilar ſeeds had vegetated, or riſen to any height in other parts of the world.

Anterior to that period philoſophers amuſed themſelves only with the ſmaller phænomena of electricity; ſuch as relate to the attraction of light bodies, the diſtances to which ſuch attraction would extend, the luminous appearance produced by the excited glaſs tube, and the firing ſpirits and inflammable air by electricity.

Little more was known on this ſubject than Thales, the Mileſian, had diſcovered 2000 years before. Sufficient *data* and experiments were wanting to reduce

reduce the doctrine and phænomena of electricity into any rules or ſyſtem, and to apply them to any beneficial purpoſes of life. This great achievement, which had eluded the induſtry and abilities of a Boyle and a Newton, was reſerved for a Franklin.

What muſt have been his ideas on the ſucceſs of his grand experiment by means of his *electrical kite?* Similar muſt his raptures have been to thoſe of a Newton, when, by applying the laws of *gravitation* and *projection* firſt to the moon, he was enabled to extend them to the whole ſolar ſyſtem, as is beautifully deſcribed by the poet:

"What were his raptures then! how fine! how ſtrong!
"And what the triumphs of old Greece and Rome
"With this compar'd—When Nature and her laws
"Stood all ſubdu'd by him, and open laid
"Their every latent glory to his view."

His inquiries and diſcoveries were confined to no limits or ſubjects. Through all the elements, in the fire and in the water, in the air and in the earth, he ſought for, and he found, new and beneficial knowledge.

Being on ſhip-board in the year 1757, an accident gave him occaſion to obſerve the wonderful effect of oil in ſtilling the waves of the ſea. He immediately determined to elucidate this new property of oil, which he did with ſucceſs; and the philoſophical world is indebted to him for being now fully acquainted with a fact which, although not unknown to Plutarch and Pliny, could, for ages paſt, have

been known only among the Dutch fiſhermen, and a few ſeamen of other nations.

He diſcovered that unaccountable agitation of the two ſurfaces in *contact*, when a quantity of *oil* floats on water in a veſſel.

He found the pulſe glaſs in Germany, and introduced it into England with improvements of his own.

He diſcovered that equal and congenial bodies, acquired different degrees of heat from the ſun's rays, according to their different colours.

He made experiments to ſhew that boats are drawn with more difficulty in ſmall canals than in greater bodies of water.

He made and publiſhed experiments for improving the art of *ſwimming*, and for allaying thirſt by bathing in ſea water.

He publiſhed obſervations on the gradual progreſs of north-eaſt ſtorms along the American coaſts contrary to the direction of the wind; and likewiſe to aſcertain the courſe, velocity, and temperature, of the *gulf-ſtream*, for the benefit of navigation.

He contrived experiments, and recommended them to the late Dr. Ingenhouz, for determining the relative powers of different metals for conducting heat.

He revived and improved the *Harmonica* or *Glaſſichord*, and extended his ſpeculations to the fine arts, ſhewing that he could taſte and criticiſe even the compoſitions of a Handel!

He

He left behind him ſome very curious thoughts, and conjectures, concerning an univerſal fluid, the original formation of the earth, and how far, from attentive obſervations made during the ſummer, it may be poſſible to foretel the mildneſs or ſeverity of the following winter.

And to conclude the whole: One of the laſt public acts in which he was concerned, was to ſanction with his name the memorial preſented to the general government of the United States on the ſubject of the *Slave Trade*, by the "Pennſylvania Society, "for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, and the "relief of the free negroes unlawfully held in bond-"age." Of this ſociety he was preſident, and the inſtitution and the deſign of it could not but be congenial to the ſoul of a man, whoſe life and labours had been devoted to the cauſe of *Liberty* for more than half a century, ardently ſtriving to extend its bleſſings to every part of the human ſpecies, and particularly to ſuch of his fellow-creatures as, being entitled to *freedom*, are nevertheleſs injuriouſly enſlaved, or detained in bondage by fraud or violence,

EU.

EULOGIUM ON DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

Read before a Society in Paris, by MONSIEUR DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULT, *Deputy to the National Aſſembly, on the thirteenth day of June* 1789.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN this ſociety was inſtituted, you placed in the liſt of its members two names illuſtrious in the annals of liberty, thoſe of Waſhington and Franklin; and already one of them is no more! Franklin died in the month of April, after ſixteen days illneſs, and his memory has received the higheſt honours that were ever paid to man, as they were the homage of a free people. All America has wept for him, and the National Aſſembly of France, by the diſtinguiſhed act of putting itſelf into mourning, tells the world that a great man belongs equally to every country.

Honoured with the friendſhip of this reſpectable man, for whom I entertained profound veneration, permit me to call your attention to him for a few moments.

Benjamin Franklin, born at Boſton in the year of our Lord 1706, was placed at a very early age under one of his brothers, who was a printer, and with whom he made a rapid progreſs in a trade ſo uſeful to mankind; indeed he acquired an attachment for it which continued as long as he lived. During his reſidence at Paſſey, ſo celebrated by being the place of his retreat

while

while in France, he frequently invited Meſſieurs Didot, Pierres, and other diſtinguiſhed artiſts of the capital to viſit him, and contributed, by his penetrating and inventive genius, to the advancement of a ſcience to which he had ever been fondly attached.

Scarcely emerged from infancy, young Franklin, a journeyman printer, was a philoſopher without being conſcious of it; and by the continual exerciſe of his genius, prepared himſelf for thoſe great diſcoveries which in ſcience have aſſociated his name with that of Newton, and for thoſe political reflections which have placed him by the ſide of Solon and Lycurgus.

Ill-treated by his brother, he left Boſton, and procured employment firſt in a printing-office at New-York, and afterwards at Philadelphia, where he ſettled.

America was not then what it is now. Agriculture and a few of the ruder arts almoſt excluſively occupied the unpoliſhed people by whom it was inhabited. The religious fanaticiſm which had conducted thither the firſt Engliſh emigrants, left traces that ſometimes diſturbed its tranquillity, particularly in the northern provinces, and confined the education of the inhabitants to a narrow circle, of which ſuperſtition was frequently the centre.

Pennſylvania, however, whoſe legiſlator, although a fanatic *, cheriſhed liberty, was in this reſpect more happily ſituated for the reception of improvement.

* This term is ſurely improper when applied to William Penn. TRANS.

Soon

Soon after his arrival in this province, Franklin, in concert with ſome other young men, eſtabliſhed a ſmall club, where every member brought his ſtock of ideas, which were ſubmitted to diſcuſſion. This ſociety, of which the young printer was the ſoul, has been the ſource of many uſeful eſtabliſhments, calculated to promote the progreſs of ſcience, the mechanical arts, and particularly the improvement of the human underſtanding.

A newſpaper that iſſued from his preſs was the means he employed to draw the attention of his countrymen. There he hazarded anonymous propoſals, t firſt looſe, but afterwards more preciſe and definitive, and he ſet on foot ſubſcriptions which were the more readily filled, as every ſubſcriber might conſider himſelf as the head of an undertaking, the author of which was not named.

It was in this manner that public libraries were founded, that ſeminaries of education, ſince become celebrated colleges, aroſe; it was in this manner that the philoſophical ſociety of Philadelphia, no contemptible rival of the academies of Europe, was formed; that aſſociations for ornamenting, cleanſing, and lighting the ſtreets of that city, and for preventing fires, were eſtabliſhed, and that commercial ſocieties, and even military bodies for the defence of the country, were incorporated. Nothing was foreign to the genius of Franklin; and his name, which his modeſty endeavoured to conceal, was always placed by his countrymen in the liſts, and frequently at the head

head of thoſe different ſocieties, the members of which were deſirous of retaining him as their honorary chief. But higher avocations called him from his country, which he was deſtined to ſerve more effectually as its agent in the metropolis of England.

He was ſent thither in the year 1757. Celebrated for his aſtoniſhing diſcoveries reſpecting the nature, effects, and identity, of thunder and electricity, and the means of guarding againſt their ravages, his fame had arrived before him. The letters by which he had announced theſe diſcoveries remained for a long time unnoticed by the Royal Society of London; but they were at length publiſhed, and all the learned of Europe were informed, that in the new world exiſted a philoſopher who was worthy of their admiration.

The ſtamp act, by which the Britiſh Miniſter wiſhed to familiariſe the Americans to pay taxes to the mother country, revived that love of liberty which had led their forefathers to a country at that time a deſert; and the colonies formed a Congreſs, the firſt idea of which had been communicated to them by Franklin, at the conferences at Albany in the year 1754. The war that was juſt terminated, and the exertions made by them to ſupport it, had given them a conviction of their own ſtrength; they accordingly oppoſed this odious meaſure, and the Miniſter gave way, but reſerved the means of renewing his attempts. Once cautioned, however, they remained on their guard; liberty, cheriſhed by theſe alarms, took deep root; a ſalutary fermentation agitated their minds,

and

and prepared for the revolution, men, whoſe names it has rendered juſtly celebrated. Among theſe were Hancock, Samuel and John Adams, the ſage Jefferſon *, Jay, Green, and the great Waſhington; and they were not a little obliged for the rapid circulation of ideas to newſpapers, for the introduction of which they were indebted to the printer of Philadelphia. In the year 1766, this printer, called to the bar of the Houſe of Commons of Great Britain, underwent that famous interrogotary which placed the name of Franklin as high in politics, as it was before in natural philoſophy.

From that time he defended the cauſe of America with a firmneſs and moderation becoming a great man, pointing out to miniſtry all the errors they had committed, and the conſequences they would produce, until the period when, the tax on tea meeting the ſame oppoſition as the ſtamp act had done, England blindly fancied herſelf capable of ſubjecting by force three millions of men determined to be free, at a diſtance of two thouſand leagues from her territories.

Every man is well acquainted with the particulars of that war, its fortunate reſult to the whole univerſe,

* Mr. Jefferſon was afterwards miniſter plenipotentiary from the United States to the court of France, where he ſucceeded Franklin. It was he who framed the act of independence of the United States, and the act paſſed in Virginia for eſtabliſhing religious liberty. America has lately recalled him from France, where he is truly regretted, to confer on him the office of Secretary of State for foreign affairs.

the part taken in it by France under a King who, protector of the liberties of America, has ſince meritoriouſly obtained from the French nation the title of reſtorer of the liberty of his own country; and the brilliant ſervices of that youth whoſe name, glorioufly connected with that revolution, has acquired freſh luſtre in a revolution infinitely more great.

Having aſſerted their independence, and placed themſelves in the rank of nations, the different colonies, now the United States of America, adopted each its own form of government; and retaining almoſt univerſally their admiration for the Britiſh Conſtitution, framed them from the ſame principles variouſly modelled.

Franklin alone, diſengaging the political machine from thoſe multiplied movements and admired counterpoiſes that rendered it ſo complicated, propoſed the reducing it to the ſimplicity of a ſingle legiſlative body. This grand idea ſtartled the legiſlators of Pennſylvania; but the philoſopher removed the fears of a conſiderable number, and at length determined the whole to adopt a principle which the National Aſſembly has made the baſis of the French conſtitution *.

After

* The uſual progreſs of the human mind leads man from the complex to the ſimple. Obſerve the works of the firſt mechanics overloaded with numerous pieces, ſome of which embarraſs, and others diminiſh their effect. It has been the ſame with legiſlators, both ſpeculative and practical; ſtruck with an abuſe, they have endeavoured

After having given laws to his country, Franklin determined to viſit Europe once more, in order to ſerve it, not by repreſentations to the mother-country, or anſwers at the bar of the Houſe of Commons, but by treaties with France, and ſucceſſively with other ſtates, which, though governed by monarchs

deavoured to correct it by inſtitutions that have been productive of ſtill greater abuſes. In political œconomy the unity of the legiſlative body is the *maximum* of ſimplicity. Franklin was the firſt who dared to put this idea in practice: The reſpect the Pennſylvanians entertained for him induced them to adopt it; but the other ſtates were terrified at it, and even the conſtitution of Pennſylvania has ſince been altered. In Europe this opinion has been more ſucceſsful. When I had the honour to preſent to Franklin the tranſlations of the conſtitutions of America, the minds of people on this ſide the Atlantic were ſcarcely better diſpoſed toward it than thoſe on the other ſide; and if we except Dr. Price in England, and Turgot and Condorcet in France, no man who applied himſelf to politics agreed in opinion with the American philoſopher. I will venture to aſſert that I was of the ſmall number of thoſe who were ſtruck with the beauty of the ſimple plan he traced, and that I ſaw no reaſon to change my opinion when the National Aſſembly, led by the voice of thoſe deep-thinking and eloquent orators who diſcuſſed that important queſtion, eſtabliſhed it as a principle of the French Conſtitution, that legiſlation ſhould be confided to a ſingle body of repreſentatives. It will not perhaps be deemed unpardonable to have once mentioned myſelf, at a time when the honour I have of holding a public character makes it my duty to give an account of my ſentiments to my fellow-citizens. France will not relapſe into a more complex ſyſtem, but will aſſuredly acquire the glory of maintaining that which ſhe has eſtabliſhed, and give it a degree of perfection which, by rendering a great nation happy, will attract the eyes and the applauſes of all Europe, and of the whole world.

or deſpots, liſtened to the voice of an American ſpeaking liberty.

Some years previous to this I became acquainted with him during a journey I made to London; and permit me, Gentlemen, to recall to my mind the happineſs I felt when, on his arrival at Paris, I conducted to his houſe Monſieur Turgot, then ex-miniſter, and ſaw thoſe two excellent men, both ſo deſerving of the admiration and regret of mankind, embrace for the firſt time. Franklin at leaſt completed a long career; but Turgot, taken from the world at the age of fifty-four, ſaw not his country reſtored to freedom. It was he who wrote under the portrait of Franklin that beautiful verſe,

Eripuit cœlo fulmen, mox ſceptra tyrannis,

the laſt hemiſtich of which was a prophecy that was ſpeedily accompliſhed.

The viciſſitudes of fortune experienced by the Americans ſometimes gave conſiderable anxiety to their illuſtrious negociator; but his great mind, encouraged by the bravery of his countrymen, by the firmneſs of the Congreſs, and, above all, by the genius, talents, and virtues, of the immortal Waſhington, did not give way to fear. He did not, however, flatter himſelf that peace would ſo ſoon finiſh the courſe of that happy revolution; and when I embraced him, the day on which he had ſigned the articles, "My friend," ſaid he to me with an air of

perfect

perfect ſatisfaction, "could I have hoped at my age "to have enjoyed ſuch a happineſs?"

Whatever attractions an abode in France had for him, whatever pleaſure he taſted in the ſociety of the friends he had made, however great was the danger of ſo long a voyage to an old man of ſeventy-nine years of age, tormented with the ſtone, it was now neceſſary for him to reviſit his country. He ſet off in the year 1785, and his return to America, at length become free, was a triumph of which antiquity cannot furniſh us with any example.

He lived five years after this period: For three years he was preſident of the General Aſſembly of Pennſylvania; he was a member of the convention that eſtabliſhed the new form of fœderal government; and his laſt public act afforded a grand example for thoſe who are employed in the legiſlation of their country. In this convention he had differed in ſome points from the majority; but when the articles were ultimately decreed, he ſaid to his colleagues, "We ought "to have but one opinion; the good of our country "requires that our reſolutions be unanimous."

His almoſt continual ſufferings for the two laſt years of his life had neither altered his temper nor his diſpoſition, and to the laſt moment he retained the uſe of all his faculties. His will, which he made during his reſidence here, and which has juſt been opened, begins with a compliment to his profeſſion. Even on his death-bed he did homage to typography, and the ſame ſentiment induced him to inſtruct his

grand-ſon, Benjamin Beach, in this art, who, proud of the leſſons of his illuſtrious maſter, is now a printer in Philadelphia.

He never wrote a work of any length. Almoſt every thing publiſhed by him on ſubjects of natural philoſophy conſiſts of letters to Mr. Collinſon of the Royal Society of London, and to ſome other men of learning in Europe; they have been tranſlated into French by Monſieur Barbeu du Bourg; but perhaps a new verſion hath become neceſſary. His political works, many of which are not known in France, conſiſt of letters or ſhort tracts; but all of them, even thoſe of humour, bear the marks of his obſerving genius and mild philoſophy. He wrote many things for that rank and deſcription of people who have no opportunity for ſtudy, and whom it is of ſo much conſequence to inſtruct; and he was well ſkilled in reducing uſeful truths to maxims eaſily retained, and ſometimes to proverbs or little tales, the ſimple or the natural graces of which acquire a new value when aſſociated with the name of their author.

The moſt voluminous of his works is the hiſtory of his own life, which he commenced for the uſe of his ſon, and for the continuation of which we are indebted to the ardent ſolicitations of Monſieur le Veillard, one of his moſt intimate friends. It employed his leiſure hours during the latter part of his life, but the bad ſtate of his health, and his excruciating pains, which gave him little reſpite, frequently interrupted his work; and the two copies, one of which was

ſent

ſent by him to London to Dr. Price and Mr. Vaughan, and the other to Monſieur le Veillard and me, reach no farther than the year 1757. He ſpeaks of himſelf as he would have done of another perſon, delineating his thoughts, his actions, and even his errors and faults; and he deſcribes the unfolding of his genius and talents with the ſimplicity of a great man who knows how to do juſtice to himſelf, and with the teſtimony of a clear conſcience void of reproach and "of offence "towards God and towards man."

In fact, Gentlemen, the whole life of Franklin, his meditations, his labours, have all been directed to public utility; but the grand object that he had always in view did not ſhut his heart againſt ſociety: He loved his family and his friends; he was beneficent; the charms of his converſation were inexpreſſible; he ſpoke little, but he did not refuſe to ſpeak, and his communications were always intereſting, and always inſtructive. In the midſt of his occupations for the liberty of his country, he had always ſome curious experiment near him in his cloſet; and the ſciences, which he had rather diſcovered than ſtudied, afforded him a continual ſource of pleaſure.

His memoirs, Gentlemen, will be publiſhed as ſoon as we receive from America the additions he may have made to the manuſcript in our poſſeſſion; and we then intend to give a complete collection of his works.

His name will be celebrated among the different associations of politics and of literature. Innumerable eulogies will be written or pronounced upon him, and you doubtless expect with impatience that of the virtuous orator *, the organ of the Academy of Sciences, in which the most honourable praise will be bestowed by him who best knew how to appreciate the worth of Franklin. The eulogium to which I allude, is to forerun the award of history, which will place this illustrious name among the most eminent benefactors of his species; which will trace the incidents of his life, pourtray the anguish of his fellow-citizens at his death, who believed that in him they lost a father and a friend, and which, after recounting the honours that America had consecrated to his memory, will also register in its calendar the splendid homage which the National Assembly has just paid, as an incident equally honourable to the people who thus displayed their love of virtue, and to the man who thus merited this mark of their attention.

As soon as the above eulogium was concluded, M. de Liancourt made a motion, that the members of the society should wear the mourning decreed by the National Assembly; and that the bust of Franklin should be placed in their hall, with the following inscription:

* M. de Condorcet.

"In

"In teſtimony of the homage rendered by the una-
"nimous vote of the ſociety of the year 1789,
"to Benjamin Franklin, admired and regret-
"ted by all the friends of liberty."

The motion was carried unanimouſly. M. de la Rochefoucault then preſented to the ſociety a buſt of Benjamin Franklin, and the ſociety voted him their thanks.

OBSERVATIONS on the generally prevailing Doctrines of Life and Death: In a Letter from Dr. Benjamin Franklin *to* M. Dubourg, *the French Tranſlator of his Works.*

Dear Sir,

YOUR obſervations on the cauſes of death, and the experiments which you propoſe for recalling to life thoſe who appear to be killed by lightning, demonſtrate equally your ſagacity and your humanity. It appears that the doctrines of life and death, in general, are yet but little underſtood.

A toad buried in ſand will live, it is ſaid, till the ſand becomes petrified; and then, being incloſed in the ſtone, it may ſtill live for we know not how many years or ages. The facts which are cited in ſupport of this opinion are too numerous and too circumſtantial not to deſerve a certain degree of credit.

dit. As we are accuſtomed to ſee all the animals with which we are acquainted eat and drink, it appears to us difficult to conceive how a toad can be ſupported in ſuch a dungeon; but if we reflect that the neceſſity of nouriſhment, which animals experience in their ordinary ſtate, proceeds from the continual waſte of their ſubſtance by perſpiration, it will appear leſs incredible that ſome animals in a torpid ſtate, perſpiring leſs becauſe they uſe no exerciſe, ſhould have leſs need of aliment, and that others, who are covered with ſcales or ſhells, which ſtop perſpiration, ſuch as land and ſea turtles, ſerpents, and every ſpecies of fiſh, ſhould be able to ſubſiſt a conſiderable time without any nouriſhment whatever. A plant, with its flowers, fades and dies immediately if expoſed to the air without having its root immerſed in an humid ſoil, from which it may draw a ſufficient quantity of moiſture to ſupply that which exhales from its ſubſtance, and is carried off continually by the air. Perhaps, however, if it were buried in quickſilver, it might preſerve for a conſiderable ſpace of time its vegetable life, its ſmell, and colour. If this be the caſe, it might prove a commodious method of tranſporting from diſtant countries thoſe delicate plants which are unable to ſuſtain the inclemency of the weather at ſea, and which require particular care and attention.

I have ſeen an inſtance of common flies preſerved in a manner ſomewhat ſimilar. They had been drowned in Madeira wine apparently about the time when

when it was bottled in Virginia to be ſent to London. At the opening of one of the bottles, at the houſe of a friend where I then was, three drowned flies fell into the firſt glaſs that was filled. Having heard it remarked that drowned flies were capable of being revived by the rays of the ſun, I propoſed making the experiment upon theſe: They were, therefore, expoſed to the ſun upon a ſieve, which had been employed to ſtrain them out of the wine. In leſs than three hours two of them began by degrees to recover life. This commenced by ſome convulſive motions in the thighs, and at length they raiſed themſelves upon their legs, wiped their eyes with their fore-feet, beat and bruſhed their wings with their hind-feet, and ſoon after began to fly, finding themſelves in old England without knowing how they came thither. The third continued lifeleſs till ſun-ſet, when, loſing all hopes of him, he was thrown away.

I wiſh it were poſſible, from this inſtance, to invent a method of embalming drowned perſons, in ſuch a manner that they might be recalled to life at any period however diſtant; for, having a very ardent deſire to ſee and obſerve the ſtate of America an hundred years hence, I ſhould prefer to an ordinary death, the being immerſed in a caſk of Madeira wine with a few friends till that time, to be then recalled to life by the ſolar warmth of my dear country. But ſince, in all probability, we live in an age too early, and too near the infancy of ſcience, to hope

to

to ſee ſuch an art brought in our time to perfection, I muſt, for the preſent, content myſelf with the treat which you are ſo kind as to promiſe me of the reſurrection of a fowl or a turkey-cock.

I am, dear Sir,

Your ſincere friend,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

LETTER from Dr. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN *to* BENJAMIN VAUGHAN, ESQ., *on the Criminal Laws, and the Practice of Privateering.*

MY DEAR FRIEND, *March* 14, 1785.

AMONG the pamphlets you lately ſent me was one entitled, "Thoughts on Executive Juſtice." In return for that I ſend you a French one on the ſame ſubject, entitled, "Obſervations concernant l'Exécution de l'Article II. de la Declaration ſur le Vol." They are both addreſſed to the judges, but written, as you will ſee, in a very different ſpirit. The Engliſh author is for hanging all thieves; the Frenchman is for proportioning puniſhments to offences.

If we really believe, as we profeſs to believe, that the law of Moſes is the law of God, and the dictates of divine wiſdom infinitely ſuperior to human; on what principles do we ordain death as the puniſhment of an offence which, according to that law,

was

was only to be punished by a restitution of fourfold? To put a man to death for a crime which does not deserve death, is it not a murder? And as the French writer says, "Doit-on punir un délit contre "la société par un crime contre la nature?"

Superfluous property is the creature of society. Simple and mild laws were sufficient to guard the property that was merely necessary. The savage's bow, his hatchet, and his coat of skins, were sufficiently secured, without law, by the fear of personal resentment and retaliation. When, by virtue of the first laws, part of the society accumulated wealth and grew powerful, they enacted others more severe, and would protect their property at the expence of humanity. This was abusing their power, and commencing a tyranny. If a savage, before he entered into society, had been told, "Your neighbour by this "means may become owner of an hundred deer; but "if your brother, or your son, or yourself, having no "deer of your own, and being hungry, should kill "one, an infamous death must be the consequence;" he would probably have preferred his liberty, and his common right of killing any deer, to all the advantages of society that might be proposed to him.

That it is better an hundred guilty persons escape, than that one innocent person should suffer, is a maxim that has been long and generally approved, and never, that I know of, controverted. Even the sanguinary author of the "Thoughts, &c." agrees to it, observing, "that the very thought of injured "innocence, and much more that of suffering inno-

"cence,

" cence, muſt awaken all our tendereſt and moſt " compaſſionate feelings, and, at the ſame time, " raiſe our higheſt indignation againſt the inſtru- " ments of it. But," he adds, " there is no dan- " ger of either from a ſtrict adherence to the laws." Really?—Is it then impoſſible to make an unjuſt law? And if the law itſelf be unjuſt, may it not be the very " inſtrument" which ought " to raiſe the au- " thor's and every body's higheſt indignation?" I ſee, in the laſt newſpapers from London, that a woman is capitally convicted at the Old Bailey, for privately ſtealing out of a ſhop ſome gauze, value fourteen ſhillings and three-pence, and the puniſhment of an human creature for this offence is by death on a gibbet! Might not that woman, by her own labour and induſtry, have made the reparation ordained by God in paying fourfold? Is not all puniſhment inflicted beyond the merit of the offence, ſo much puniſhment of innocence? In this light how vaſt is the annual quantity of not only injured but ſuffering innocence, in almoſt all the civilized ſtates of Europe!

But it ſeems to have been thought that this kind of innocence may be puniſhed by way of preventing crimes. I have read indeed of a cruel Turk in Barbary, who, whenever he bought a new Chriſtian ſlave, ordered him immediately to be hung up by the heels, and to receive an hundred blows of a cudgel on the ſoles of his feet, that the ſevere ſenſe of the puniſhment, and fear of incurring it there-

after,

after, might prevent the faults that ſhould merit it. Our author himſelf would hardly approve entirely of this Turk's conduct in the government of ſlaves, and yet he appears to recommend ſomething like it for the government of Engliſh ſubjects.

He applauds the reply of Judge Burnet to the convicted horſe ſtealer, who being aſked what he had to ſay, why judgment of death ſhould not be paſſed againſt him? and anſwering, that it was hard to hang a man for only ſtealing an horſe, was told by the judge, "Man, thou art not to be hanged only for "ſtealing a horſe, but that horſes may not be "ſtolen."

But the man's anſwer, if candidly examined, will, I imagine, appear reaſonable, as being founded upon the eternal principles of juſtice and equity, that puniſhments ſhould be proportioned to offences, and the judge's reply brutal and unreaſonable, though the writer "wiſhes all judges to carry it with them "whenever they go the circuit, and to bear it in "their minds, as containing a wiſe reaſon for all "the penal ſtatutes which they are called upon to "put in execution. It at once illuſtrates (ſays he) "the true grounds and reaſons of all capital puniſh-"ments whatſoever, namely, that every man's pro-"perty, as well as his life, may he held ſacred and "inviolate."

Is there then no difference in value between property and life? If I think it right that the crime of murder ſhould be puniſhed with death, not only as

an equal puniſhment of the crime, but to prevent other murders, does it follow that I muſt approve of inflicting the ſame puniſhment for a little invaſion on my property by theft? If I am not myſelf ſo barbarous, ſo bloody-minded, and revengeful as to kill a fellow-creature for ſtealing from me fourteen ſhillings and three-pence, how can I approve of a law that does it?

Monteſquieu, who was himſelf a judge, endeavours to impreſs other maxims. He muſt have known what humane judges feel on ſuch occaſions, and what the effects of thoſe feelings are; and ſo far from thinking that ſevere and exceſſive puniſhments prevent crimes, he aſſerts, as quoted by our French writer, that

" *L'atrocité des loix en empêche l'exécution.*

" *Lorſque la peine eſt ſans meſure on eſt ſouvent obli-*
" *gé de lui préférer l' impunité.*

" *La cauſe de tous les relâchemens vient de l'impu-*
" *nité des crimes, et non de la moderation des peines.*"

It is ſaid by thoſe who know Europe generally, that there are more thefts committed and puniſhed annually in England, than in all the other nations put together. If this be ſo, there muſt be a cauſe or cauſes for ſuch groſs depravity in the common people. May not one be the deficiency of juſtice and morality in our national government, manifeſted in our oppreſſive conduct to ſubjects, and unjuſt wars on our neighbours? View the long-perſiſted-in, un-

juſt,

juſt, monopolizing treatment of Ireland at length acknowledged.

View the plundering government exerciſed by our merchants in the Indies, the confiſcating war made upon the American colonies, and, to ſay nothing of thoſe upon France and Spain, view the late war upon Holland, which was ſeen by impartial Europe in no other light than that of a war of rapine and pillage, the hopes of an immenſe and eaſy prey being its only apparent and, probably, its true and real motive and encouragement.

Juſtice is as ſtrictly due between neighbour nations, as between neighbour citizens. An highwayman is as much a robber when he plunders in a gang as when ſingle; and a nation that makes an unjuſt war is only a great gang. After employing your people in robbing the Dutch, is it ſtrange, that being put out of that employment by peace, they ſtill continue robbing and plundering one another?

Privaterie, as the French call it, or privateering, is the univerſal bent of the Engliſh nation, at home and abroad, wherever ſettled. No leſs than ſeven hundred privateers were, it is ſaid, commiſſioned in the laſt war! Theſe were fitted out by merchants to prey upon other merchants, who had never done them any injury. Is there any one of thoſe privateering merchants in London, who were ſo ready to rob the merchants of Amſterdam, that would not as readily plunder another London merchant of the next ſtreet, if he could do it, with the ſame impunity? The

avidity, the *alieni appetens*, is the ſame: It is the fear alone of the gallows that makes the difference.

How then can a nation, which, amongſt the honeſteſt of its people, has ſo many thieves by inclination, and whoſe government encouraged and commiſſioned no leſs than ſeven hundred gangs of robbers, how can ſuch a nation have the face to condemn the crime in individuals, and hang up twenty of them in a morning! It naturally puts one in mind of a Newgate anecdote: One of the priſoners complained that in the night ſomebody had taken his buckles out of his ſhoes; "What the devil!" ſays another, "have "we then thieves amongſt us? It muſt not be ſuffer-"ed; let us ſearch out the rogue, and pump him "to death."

There is, however, one late inſtance of an Engliſh merchant who would not profit by ſuch ill-gotten gain. He was, it ſeems, part owner of a ſhip, which the other owners thought fit to employ as a letter of *marque*, and which took a number of French prizes. The booty being ſhared, he has now an agent here inquiring by an advertiſement in the Gazette, for thoſe who ſuffered the loſs, in order to make them, as far as in him lies, reſtitution. This conſcientious man is a Quaker.

The Scotch Preſbyterians were formerly as tender; for there is ſtill extant an ordinance of the town-council of Edinburgh, made ſoon after the Reformation, forbidding "the purchaſe of prize goods, under pain "of loſing the freedom of the burgh for ever, with

"other

"other puniſhment at the will of the magiſtrates, the "practice of making prizes being contrary to good "conſcience, and the rule of treating Chriſtian bre-"thren as we would wiſh to be treated; and ſuch "goods are not to be ſold by any godly men within "this burgh." The race of theſe godly men in Scotland is probably extinct, or their principles abandoned, ſince, as far as that nation had a hand in promoting the war againſt the colonies, prizes and confiſcations are believed to have been a conſiderable motive.

It has been for ſome time a generally received opinion, that a military man is not to inquire whether a war be juſt or unjuſt; he is to execute his orders. All princes, who are diſpoſed to become tyrants, moſt probably approve of this opinion, and are willing to eſtabliſh it; but is it not a dangerous one? ſince on that principle, if the tyrant commands his army to attack and deſtroy not only an unoffending neighbour nation, but even his own ſubjects, the army is bound to obey. A negro ſlave in our colonies, being commanded by his maſter to rob or murder a neighbour, or do any other immoral act, may refuſe, and the magiſtrate will protect him in his refuſal. The ſlavery then of a ſoldier is worſe than that of a negro! A conſcientious officer, if not reſtrained by the apprehenſion of its being imputed to another cauſe, may indeed reſign, rather than be employed in an unjuſt war; but the private men are ſlaves for life; and they are, perhaps, incapable of judging for themſelves. We can only lament their fate, and ſtill more that of a ſailor, who is often

dragged by force from his honeſt occupation, and compelled to imbrue his hands in, perhaps, innocent blood. But methinks it well behoves merchants (men more enlightened by their education, and perfectly free from any ſuch force or obligation) to conſider well of the juſtice of a war, before they voluntarily engage a gang of ruffians to attack their fellow-merchants of a neighbouring nation, to plunder them of their property, and, perhaps, ruin them and their families if they yield it, or to wound, maim, and murder them, if they endeavour to defend it. Yet theſe things are done by Chriſtian merchants, whether a war be juſt or unjuſt; and it can hardly be juſt on both ſides. They are done by Engliſh and American merchants, who nevertheleſs complain of private theft, and hang by dozens the thieves they have taught by their own example.

It is high time, for the ſake of humanity, that a ſtop were put to this enormity. The United States of America, though better ſituated than any European nation to make profit by privateering (moſt of the trade of Europe with the Weſt Indies, paſſing before their doors), are, as far as in them lies, endeavouring to aboliſh the practice, by offering, in all their treaties with other powers, an article, engaging ſolemnly that, in caſe of a future war, no privateer ſhall be commiſſioned on either ſide; and that unarmed merchant ſhips ſhall purſue their voyages unmoleſted*.

This

* This offer having been accepted by the late King of Pruſſia, a treaty of amity and commerce was concluded between that Monarch

This will be an happy improvement of the law of nations. The humane and juſt cannot but wiſh general ſucceſs to the propoſition.

With unchangeable eſteem and affection,

I am, my dear friend,

Ever your's,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Monarch and the United States, containing the following humane philanthropic article, in the formation of which Dr. Franklin, as one of the American plenipotentiaries, was principally concerned, viz.

ARTICLE TWENTY-THIRD.

IF war ſhould ariſe between the two contracting parties, the merchants of either country then reſiding in either, ſhall be allowed to remain nine months to collect their debts, and ſettle their affairs, and may depart freely, carrying off all their effects without moleſtation or hindrance; and all women and children, ſcholars of every faculty, cultivators of the earth, artizans, manufacturers, and fiſhermen, unarmed, and inhabiting unfortified towns, villages, or places, and in general all others whoſe occupations are for the common ſubſiſtence and benefit of mankind, ſhall be allowed to continue their reſpective employments, and ſhall not be moleſted in their perſons, nor ſhall their houſes or goods be burned, or otherwiſe deſtroyed, nor their fields waſted by the armed force of the enemy, into whoſe power, by the event of war, they may happen to fall; but if any thing is neceſſary to be taken from them for the uſe of ſuch armed force, the ſame ſhall be paid for at a reaſonable price. And all merchants and trading veſſels, employed in exchanging the products of different places, and thereby rendering the neceſſaries, conveniencies, and comforts of human life more eaſy to be obtained, and more general, ſhall be allowed to paſs free and unmoleſted; and neither of the contracting powers ſhall grant or iſſue any commiſſion to any private armed veſſels, empowering them to take or deſtroy ſuch trading veſſels, or interrupt ſuch commerce.

LETTER from Dr. FRANKLIN *to Madame* B***.
Written at Paſſey, near Paris.

YOU perhaps recollect, Madam, when we lately ſpent ſo happy a day in the delightful gardens of *Moulin Joli*, with the amiable ſociety who reſided there, that I ſtopped in one of the walks, and permitted the company to paſs on without me.

We had been ſhewn an infinite number of dead flies of the ephemeron ſpecies, the ſucceſſive generations of which, it is ſaid, are born and die in the ſame day.

I happened to perceive, on a leaf, a living family engaged in converſation. You know, Madam, I underſtand the language poken by every ſpecies of animals inferior to our own; and the very cloſe application I give to the ſtudy of them, is perhaps the beſt excuſe I can offer for the little proficiency I have made in your charming language.

Curioſity led me to liſten to the converſation of theſe little creatures; but, from the vivacity peculiar to their nation, three or four of them ſpoke at once, and I could ſcarcely learn any thing from their diſcourſe. I underſtood, however, from ſome broken ſentences which I caught now and then, that they were warmly diſputing about the merit of two foreign muſicians, a drone and a gnat; and that they appeared to ſpend their time in theſe debates with as little

little concern for the brevity of life, as if they had been ſure of living for a whole month. "Happy "people!" ſaid I to myſelf, "you certainly live un- "der a wiſe, equitable, and moderate government; "ſince no public grievances call forth your com- "plaints, and your only ſource of diſpute is the per- "fection or imperfection of foreign muſic."

I left them ſoon after, in order to obſerve an aged ephemeron with grey hairs, who, perched ſolitary on a leaf, was talking to himſelf. His ſoliloquy will, I believe, amuſe that amiable friend to whom I am indebted for the moſt agreeable of my recreations, the charms of animated converſation, and the divine harmony of muſical execution.

"It was the opinion," ſaid he, "of the learned "philoſophers of our race, who lived and flouriſhed "before us, that this vaſt world itſelf could not ſub- "ſiſt more than eighteen hours; and that opinion to "me appears to have ſome foundation, ſince, by the "motion of the great luminary that gives life to the "whole nation, and which in my time has, in a "perceptible manner, declined conſiderably towards "the ocean that bounds the earth, it muſt ne- "ceſſarily terminate its courſe at that period, be "extinguiſhed in the waters that ſurround us, and "deliver up the world to cold and darkneſs, the in- "fallible forerunners of death and univerſal deſtruc- "tion. I have lived ſeven hours in theſe eighteen; "it is a great age, amounting to no leſs than four

" hundred and twenty minutes. How few of us live " ſo long!

" I have ſeen whole generations ſpring up, flou- " riſh, and diſappear. My preſent friends are the " children and grandchildren of the friends of my " youth, who, alas! are no more, and whom I muſt " ſoon follow; for, in the ordinary courſe of nature, " I cannot expect, though in good health, to live " more than ſeven or eight minutes longer.

" What avail at preſent all my labours, all my fa- " tigues, to accumulate a proviſion of ſweet dew " which I ſhall not live long enough to conſume? " What avail the political diſcuſſions in which I am " engaged for the ſervice of my countrymen, the in- " habitants of this buſh; or my philoſophical inqui- " ries, devoted to the welfare of the ſpecies in ge- " neral? In politics, what are laws without man- " ners?

" A courſe of minutes will render the preſent ge- " neration as corrupt as the ancient inhabitants of " other buſhes, and, of conſequence, as unhappy. " And in philoſophy, how ſlow is our progreſs! Alas! " art is long, and life is ſhort! My friends would con- " ſole me with the name which, they ſay, I ſhall " leave behind me. They tell me I have lived long " enough for glory and for nature. But what is fame " to an ephemeron that will be no longer in exiſt- " ence? What will hiſtory become, when, at the " eighteenth hour, the world itſelf will be drawn to

" a cloſe, and be no longer any thing but a heap of
" ruins?

" For myſelf, after having made ſo many buſy re-
" ſearches, the only real bleſſings that remain to me,
" are, the ſatisfaction of having ſpent my life with
" the view of being uſeful, the pleaſing converſation
" of a ſmall number of good lady ephemeras, and
" now and then the captivating ſmiles of Madame
" B**, and the ſweet ſounds of her *forte piano.*"

EULOGIUM

ON

Benjamin Franklin, LL.D. &c.

DELIVERED IN THE ROTUNDA,

ON THE 21ST OF JULY, 1790,

IN THE NAME OF THE COMMONS OF PARIS;

In preſence of the Deputies to the Legiſlative Aſſembly, and of all the Departments in the Kingdom, the Mayor, the Commandant-General of the National Guards, the Repreſentatives of the Commons, the Preſidents of the Diſtricts, and the Electors of the Capital.

BY THE ABBE FAUCHET,

NOW CONSTITUTIONAL BISHOP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CALVADOS,

AND A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Repreſentatives of the Commons of Paris paſſed a vote on the twenty-ſecond of July 1790, in conſequence of which it was ordered, that this Eulogium ſhould be printed, and preſented to the National Aſſembly of France, and the Congreſs of America.

EULOGIUM

ON

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN;

Pronounced by the Abbé FAUCHET, *in the Name of the Commons of Paris.*

A SECOND creation has taken place; the elements of ſociety begin to combine together; the moral univerſe is now ſeen iſſuing from chaos; the genius of Liberty is awakened, and ſprings up; ſhe ſheds her divine light and creative powers upon the two hemiſpheres: A great nation, aſtoniſhed at ſeeing herſelf free, ſtretches her arms from one extremity of the earth to the other, and embraces the firſt nation that became ſo: The foundations of a new city are created in the two worlds; brother-nations haſten to inhabit it; it is the city of mankind!

One of the firſt founders of this univerſal city was the immortal Franklin, the deliverer of America.

The ſecond founders, who accelerated this great work, made it worthy of Europe—the legiſlators of France have rendered the moſt ſolemn homage to his memory. They have ſaid—" A friend of humanity " is dead; mankind ought to be overwhelmed with " ſorrow! Nations have hitherto only worn mourning " for Kings; let us aſſume it for a Man, and let the " tears of Frenchmen mingle with thoſe of Ameri-

" cans, in order to do honour to the memory of one " of the Fathers of Liberty!"

The city of Paris, which once contained this philoſopher within its walls, which was intoxicated with the pleaſure of hearing, admiring, and loving him; of gathering from his lips the maxims of moral legiſlation, and of imbibing from the effuſions of his heart a paſſion for the public welfare, rivals Boſton and Philadelphia, his two native cities (for in one he was born as it were a man, and in the other a legiſlator), in its profound attachment to his merit and his glory.

It has commanded this funeral ſolemnity, in order to perpetuate the gratitude and the grief of this third country, which, by the courage and activity with which it has profited of his leſſons, has ſhewn itſelf worthy of having him at once for an inſtructor and a model.

In ſelecting me for the interpreter of its wiſhes, it has declared, that it is leſs to the talents of an orator, than the patriotiſm of a citizen, the zeal of a preacher of liberty, and the ſenſibility of a friend of men, that it hath confided this ſolemn function. In this point of view, I may ſpeak with a holy confidence; for I have the public opinion, and the teſtimony of my own conſcience, to ſecond my wiſhes. Since nothing elſe is wanting than freedom, and ſenſibility, for that ſpecies of eloquence which this eulogium requires, I am ſatisfied; for I already poſſeſs them.

My voice ſhall extend to France, to America, to poſterity; I am now to do juſtice to a great man, the

founder

founder of trans-Atlantic freedom; I am to praiſe him in the name of the mother-city of French liberty; I myſelf alſo am a man; I am a freeman; I poſſeſs the ſuffrages of my fellow-citizens: This is enough; my diſcourſe ſhall be immortal!

PART I.

THE academies, the philoſophical ſocieties, the learned aſſociations, which have done themſelves honour by inſcribing the name of Franklin in their records, can beſt appreciate the debt due to his genius, for having extended the power of man over nature, and preſented new and ſublime ideas, in a ſtyle ſimple as truth, and pure as light.

It is not the naturaliſt and the philoſopher that the orator of the commons of Paris ought to deſcribe; it is the *man*, who hath accelerated the progreſs of ſocial order; it is the *legiſlator*, who hath prepared the liberty of nations!

Benjamin Franklin was born at the commencement of the preſent century, in Boſton, the capital of New England.

His father, perſecuted in his own country on account of his religious opinions (for the Engliſh, ſo wavering in regard to religion, and who have ſo often changed it by *act of Parliament*, at the nod of corrupt

rupt Kings, or fanatical chiefs, have always been, and are at this very day, perſecutors); his father, I ſay, took refuge in the new world, where the church of England, not having as yet intruded her intolerant ſolicitude, permitted the liberty of conſcience.

His profeſſion was obſcure; but it is from this very obſcurity that it is glorious for him to have elevated himſelf to the head of his nation, and to become the chief, as it were, of mankind.

He who was deſtined to be the founder and the preſident of the Philoſophical Society of Philadelphia, the creator and the ſoul of the congreſs of America, was at firſt brought up to the trade of a tallow-chandler. The celebrated orator Flechier began life among ourſelves preciſely in the ſame manner: It may be conſidered as a prodigy that, under the feudal ariſtocracy, he ſhould have ever become a rich Biſhop! The hereditary Nobles, the titled families (it is but yeſterday as it were they have ceaſed to exiſt in France), regarding his elevation with a degree of ſurpriſe, mingled with ſcorn, were unable to conceive how a Miniſter dared to confer a Biſhopric upon a plebeian. "Duke," replied the Biſhop of Niſmes to one of his contemporaries, who reproached him with the occupation of his father, "this is in truth what diſtin-
"guiſhes us from each other: If you had been born
"in the ſame ſtation that I was, you would have ſtill
"remained a maker of candles!"

Gentlemen, I have mentioned this anecdote, becauſe it is ſomething in the manner of Franklin. He might

might have ſaid the ſame thing to the Engliſh Nobility, and all thoſe inſulters of merit, who think themſelves diſpenſed from poſſeſſing any, becauſe, in virtue of their family, they occupy the firſt employments in the ſtate, and obtain, even through the folly of their titles, all the honours of ſociety.

A very limited buſineſs, and one which preſented no opportunity for the developement of the human faculties, could not be deemed worthy of the genius of Franklin. The art of printing had been ſcarce eſtabliſhed in America; he turned his views towards this polite art, to which the deſtiny of the human genius is attached.

He laboured aſſiduouſly in this profeſſion, firſt at Boſton, afterwards at Philadelphia, and at length at London, where, while he acquired a conſiderable degree of perfection in this art, his mind, always of a thinking turn, made a variety of obſervations on the vices of the Engliſh government, and accumulated in ſilence the means of making typography more uſeful to his country, and to human kind.

On his return to the capital of Pennſylvania, he was able to work at, direct, and even to ſupply matter for thoſe preſſes, whence were to iſſue that knowledge deſtined to be the harbinger of the glorious day of liberty.

Engliſh America was deſigned, in the eternal views of Providence, and in the combinations already ripe in the mind of Franklin, to ſee the ſun of juſtice firſt elevated above its horizon, a ſun who was pro-

greſſively to ſpread his rays over all parts of the world. Its colonies were formed of men, who did not find themſelves ſufficiently free in England; who would not depend, in regard to religion, but upon Heaven and their own conſcience; in their morals, but upon civil equality and good laws; in their happineſs, but upon domeſtic ſociety and the ſimplicity of virtue.

Penn, the firſt man who aroſe out of that ſocial chaos in which the nations had been plunged, founded Philadelphia, the City of Brethren; and which, in conſequence of this title, which it hath ever ſince ſo amply juſtified, merits the appellation of the *capital of the human kind.* It is opened to human nature, without reſtriction; for the law which prohibits the entrance of the atheiſt and the ſluggard, as not being men, does not preſent, as Franklin himſelf has very juſtly obſerved, any more than a threatening exception, which cannot poſſibly be carried into execution.

"If," ſays he, "an atheiſt exiſted in any other "part of the univerſe, he would be inſtantly con- "verted on entering into a city where every thing is "ſo admirably conducted; and if there was a ſlug- "gard, having the three amiable ſiſters, Riches, Sci- "ence, and Virtue, who are the daughters of Labour, "continually before his eyes, he would ſoon con- "ceive an affection for them, and endeavour to ob- "tain them from their father."

Delightful idea! worthy of a ſage philoſopher, the object of our preſent homage! It, at one and the ſame time, deſcribes both Franklin and Philadelphia.

A Catholic

A Catholic prieſt, I ſhall doubtleſs be reproached for delivering an eulogium on the Quakers, as I have heretofore been reproached for praiſing the Janſeniſts; as I am reproached at this very moment for pronouncing a funeral oration on a Proteſtant, who himſelf profeſſed religious principles different from thoſe that were ſpread over the face of his country.

Theſe reproaches do me honour, for they iſſue from fanaticiſm, the greateſt ſcourge of ſociety. Yes, I have praiſed, and I now praiſe again in the name of the commons of Paris, both with eagerneſs and affection, that philanthropic Janſeniſt, if they pleaſe, but, at the ſame time, very catholic and very holy preceptor of thoſe who are born deaf and dumb;—the virtuous Philadelphians, ſimple and ſublime obſervers of univerſal fraternity;—the principal philoſopher of Proteſtantiſm, the ſage Franklin, who, without being perfect in his faith, yet poſſeſſed the perfection of evangelical benevolence.

And here, Gentlemen, ſince the queſtion of univerſal toleration preſents itſelf, and enters of its own accord into the chain of ideas, which are ſucceſſively to complete the character of the great moraliſt whom I now attempt to deſcribe, permit me to ſtop. After developing the principles of this ſage, I ſhall purſue my ſubject, and fulfil the taſk you have impoſed upon me.

Men cannot be brethren, and, conſequently, cannot be ſocial creatures, while one part reprove the other for the opinions which they have formed, and

think themſelves, on account of this imaginary difference, to be ſeparated and divided from each other, as far as heaven is diſtant from hell.

No one can judge the conſcience but God alone.

He who affirms that man ought to believe, or not believe, this or that doctrine, often renders himſelf guilty of injuſtice, and always of temerity.

The firſt genius of the univerſe, although inflamed with the moſt ardent love for truth, might embrace a religious error, and think himſelf bound by his conſcience to defend it. Who is the audacious mortal, that pretends to have been able to calculate all the lights and ſhades, which might have intervened between the moſt ſimple or the moſt ſublime minds, and who dares to ſay—"all ought to believe like "me?"

Theſe are invincible prejudices to an uniformity of faith: The effects of education, the ideas inſtilled into the human mind, during infancy and youth, thoſe religious deſcriptions which inſpire the imagination with awful terrors, the cuſtomary practice of adoration, the ſanction of ſelf-love in behalf of received dogmas, a thouſand acts of virtue practiſed by ſincere believers in a particular faith; all theſe may inevitably detain the moſt righteous and juſt men in the religion of their fathers, although it may be mingled with error.

The ſage himſelf, who by means of the activity of his mind, and the force of his reflections, raiſes himſelf, while he implores the divine aſſiſtance, above vulgar

vulgar ideas and popular ſuperſtitions, only floats in the immenſity of eternal conceptions, and redeſcends, with a holy fear, to the elements of his primitive faith; he does nothing more than ſeparate it from that impure mixture, by which fanaticiſm, in his eyes, has evidently altered its venerable ſimplicity. Undoubtedly, the indolence that precludes reflection, the animal paſſions, the abuſe of our faculties, may retain, or draw us, in reſpect to religion, into thoſe errors which are imputable to us. But it appertains to us, and to Him only, who reads the heart, and probes the thoughts, to mark them down for reprobation, and to puniſh them at the day of judgment.

Thoſe actions alone, which are manifeſtly contrary to the laws of univerſal morality, are ſubmitted to the inſpection of men, and the ſentence of ſociety. The vicious, the baſe, the wicked, even when they profeſs the true faith, are the enemies of humanity. The virtuous, the good, the benevolent, even while their faith is erroneous, are the friends and the benefactors of mankind.

Such, Gentlemen, were the doctrines of the ſage, whoſe memory we are now doing honour to; and, if this were the place, it would be eaſy to prove, as he himſelf has demonſtrated, that the true ſpirit of the goſpel conſiſts in indulgence, charity, brotherly love, concord, peace, and univerſal unity.

Notwithſtanding this, "out of the pale of Catholic "faith," ſays one, "there is no ſalvation for man-"kind!"

This maxim is true, Gentlemen; but thoſe who deduce from it the reprobation of all thoſe who are of a different religion, and a frightful intolerance towards nearly the whole human race, are fanatics and impoſtors.

It is one of the avowed principles of the Catholic faith, that all thoſe who ſtrictly obſerve the natural law, that is to ſay, all virtuous men, appertain to the true church, and have Jeſus Chriſt, the light of ſouls, for their maſter and inſpector.

I pronounce this ſacred name with ſo much more ſatisfaction in this diſcourſe, as Franklin was accuſtomed to invoke it with the moſt reſpectful awe. But thoſe who do not know, and who "practiſe natu-"rally," as the Apoſtle ſays, his divine law, ſhall be judged after the teſtimony of their own conſciences, and arrive, by means of the miracles wrought through his grace, at the true light. Thus according to the principles of our religion, no one can pronounce upon the reprobation of a ſingle man, becauſe all men are in the hands of a Father who can, and who wiſhes to, ſave all; he has expreſsly told us ſo; and, although his juſtice may proſcribe incorrigible ſinners, he has left to himſelf the final determination of their doom, that ſo our hearts may not be tortured in regard to any of our brethren, who purſue along with us the paſſage to eternity. A doctrine truly Catholic, which places all men in the communion of our love, and points out to us the ſages of all the countries in the world who have done honour to their lives by a ſeries of uſeful

virtues, and thus become the friends of God, and the adopted children of the univerſal church.

This religion of virtue, by which we are inſtructed to love God and man, and which, according to the ſacred Scriptures, is the only one pure and ſpotleſs, was viſible in the heart of Franklin, and in all his works.

He preached it in the inſtructions which he compoſed, and which he printed at Philadelphia. He adorned them by means of a ſimplicity, a plainneſs, and, at the ſame time, an intelligence, a ſenſibility, and a happy air of calmneſs and tranquillity, which affected every boſom. He excelled in thoſe religious parables, of which the Scriptures furniſh ſo many amiable and ſublime examples.

Permit me, Gentlemen, to quote one compoſed by him againſt intolerance and perſecution. In it he deſcribes, in the ſame ſtyle in which Geneſis is written, the Patriarch Abraham exerciſing hoſpitality towards an old man, who refuſes to join him in thankſgiving to the Almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

The ſtranger tells him, that he will not adore any one but the God of his own country, and that he will on no account participate in any other worſhip. On this, the zeal of Abraham is kindled, he puſhes the man out of his tent, in the dead of night, and chaſes him into the deſert. In a ſhort time, the voice of the Almighty is heard: "Abraham, where is the "ſtranger?" On this, Abraham replies—"Lord,

" he refuſed to adore thee, and I chaſed the infidel " away!" And God ſaid—" for one hundred four " ſcore and eighteen years I have bore with this unbe- " liever; I have nouriſhed and clothed him all this " time, notwithſtanding his rebellion againſt me, " and yet thou, who art thyſelf a ſinner, could not " bear with him for one night!"

On this, Abraham cried out—" I have ſinned, O " Lord! let not thy anger fall upon me!" And he aroſe, and ran to the deſert; he ſought the old man; he found him; he brought him to his tent; he treated him with kindneſs, and ſent him away next morning with many preſents!

How much does this, Gentlemen, reſemble the ſtyle of the holy Scriptures! every perſon participates in the inſpiration with which it is written; we are tempted to ſearch the book of Geneſis, and wiſh to believe that we ſhall find it there! Another allegory, compoſed by Franklin, and borrowed from the art which he exerciſed, offers a convincing teſtimony of his belief in the immortality of the ſoul, the purification of it in another life, and the reſurrection of the body; I allude to his epitaph, written by himſelf*. How admirable, how ſhort, and yet how full of ſentiment, are the expreſſions contained in every line; evangelic faith and religious hope are here evident, and they forcibly point out the end of life, and the prize of virtue.

* See page 192.

It

It was thus that Franklin, in his periodical works, which had a prodigious circulation on the Continent of America, laid the ſacred foundations of ſocial morality. He was no leſs inimitable in the developement of the ſame morality, when applied to the duties of friendſhip, general charity, the employment of one's time, the happineſs attendant upon good works, the neceſſary combination of private with public welfare, the propriety and neceſſity of induſtry, and to that happy and bliſsful ſtate which puts us at eaſe with ſociety and with ourſelves. The "Proverbs of Old "Henry," and "Poor Richard," are in the hands both of the learned and the ignorant; they contain the moſt ſublime morality, reduced to popular language and common comprehenſion, and form the catechiſm of happineſs for all mankind.

Franklin was too great a moraliſt, and too well acquainted with human affairs, not to perceive that women were the arbiters of manners. He ſtrove to perfect their empire, and accordingly engaged them to adorn the ſceptre of virtue with their graces. It is in their power to excite courage, to overthrow vice by means of their diſdain, to kindle civiſm, and to light up in every heart the holy love of our country.

His daughter, who was opulent, and honoured with the public eſteem, helped to manufacture and to make up the clothing for the army with her own hands, and ſpread abroad a noble emulation among the female citizens, who became eager to aſſiſt thoſe by means of the needle and the ſpindle,

who

who were ſerving the ſtate with their ſwords and their guns.

With the charm ever attendant upon true wiſdom, and the grace ever flowing from true ſentiment, this grave philoſopher knew how to converſe with the other ſex, to inſpire them with a taſte for domeſtic occupations, to hold out to them the prize attendant upon honour unaccompanied by reproach, and inſtil the duty of cultivating the firſt precepts of education, in order to teach them to their children, and thus to acquit the debt due to nature, and fulfil the hope of ſociety! It muſt be acknowledged that, in his own country, he addreſſed himſelf to minds capable of comprehending him.

Immortal females of America! I will tell it to the daughters of France, and they only are fit to applaud you! You have attained the utmoſt of what your ſex is capable; you poſſeſs the beauty, the ſimplicity, the manners, at once natural and pure—the primitive graces of the golden age. It was among you that liberty was firſt to have its origin. But the empire of freedom, which is extended to France, is about to carry your manners along with it, and produce a revolution in morals as well as in politics.

Already our female citizens (for they have lately become ſuch) are not any longer occupied with thoſe frivolous ornaments, and vain pleaſures, which were nothing more than the amuſements of ſlavery; they have awakened the love of liberty in the boſoms of fathers, of brothers, and of huſbands; they have encou-

encouraged them to make the moſt generous ſacrifices; their delicate hands have removed the earth, dragged it along, and helped to elevate the immenſe amphitheatre of the grand confederation. It is no longer the love of voluptuous ſoftneſs that attracts their regard; it is the ſacred fire of patriotiſm.

The laws which are to reform education, and with it the national manners, are already prepared; they ſhall advance, they ſhall fortify the cauſe of liberty by means of their happy influence, and become the ſecond ſaviours of their country!

Franklin did not omit any of the means of being uſeful to men, or ſerviceable to ſociety. He ſpoke to all conditions, to both ſexes, to every age. This amiable moraliſt deſcended, in his writings, to the moſt artleſs details, to the moſt ingenuous familiarities, to the firſt ideas of a rural, a commercial, and a civil life; to the dialogues of old men and children; full at once of all the verdure and all the maturity of wiſdom; in ſhort, the prudent leſſons ariſing from the expoſition of thoſe obſcure, happy, eaſy virtues, which form ſo many links in the chain of a good man's life, derived immenſe weight from that reputation for genius which he had acquired, by being one of the firſt naturaliſts and greateſt philoſophers in the univerſe.

At one and the ſame time, he governed nature in the heavens and in the hearts of men.

Amidſt the tempeſts of the atmoſphere, he directed the thunder; amidſt the ſtorms of ſociety, he directed the

the paſſions. Think, Gentlemen, with what attentive docility, with what religious reſpect, one muſt hear the voice of a ſimple man, who preached up human happineſs, when it was recollected that it was the powerful voice of the ſame man who regulated the lightning.

He electrified the conſciences, in order to extract the deſtructive fire of vice, exactly in the ſame manner as he electrified the heavens, in order peaceably to invite from them the terrible fire of the elements. He thus exerciſed (O power immenſe of wiſdom and of genius!) two attributes of the Deity.

Figure to your own minds, this ſage with the celeſtial phyſiognomy which he poſſeſſed, with that calm and auguſt forehead, reuniting, in his own perſon, an authority over the natural and ſocial world; does he not reſemble a beneficent God deſcended upon earth, in order to extinguiſh the wrath of heaven and teach virtue to mankind?

The leiſure hours of Franklin were ſo many acts of goodneſs, which, if they were not too numerous, would form the chief charm of this oration. His amuſements conſiſted in experiments which reſembled prodigies, and of which a ſingle inſtance will ſuffice to give ſome idea. He himſelf, in a letter to one of the moſt learned Members of the Royal Society of London *, has preſented the deſcription of a feſtival, which he gave to his friends and the public upon the borders of the Schuylkill.

* Mr. Collinſon.

An

An electric ſpark, without any other conductor than the water, ſerved to light the volatile ſpirit prepared to illuminate both banks of the river, at one and the ſame moment. The inviſible ſhock of the electric matter, appeared, to the raviſhed eyes of the ſpectators, to kill the game and wild fowl prepared for the treat; culinary inſtruments turned and dreſſed the viands by means of the heat ariſing from the ethereal flame, while the goblets, as if filled by magic, became repleniſhed with the choiceſt wines of Europe.

In the mean time his gueſts, compoſed of the moſt learned men in Philadelphia, accompanied by a diſcharge of artillery from an electric battery, drank the healths of all the famous philoſophers of France, of England, of Switzerland, of Holland, of Italy, and of Germany, by turns, while the echoes ariſing from the neighbouring ſhores ſpread abroad and multiplied theſe ſolemn ſalutations. The joyous acclamations of the people of a country formerly ſavage and deſerted, but at preſent inhabited by numerous nations of new men, who have formed an alliance between ſcience and morality, reached to the ſkies.

You may eaſily conceive, Gentlemen, what a mild, but ſure aſcendant, this ſage, who inſpired his citizens with a taſte for ſuch noble pleaſures, exerciſed over their minds! Not a ſingle moment did he loſe in the courſe of his whole life; not one of his thoughts but what tended to the public welfare; not one of his laborious or of his leiſure hours which did not ſay to men,

men, "It is thus that exiſtence becomes valuable, "it is thus that mankind become happy!"

I have not as yet attempted to paint any thing more than the philoſopher, who, by the force of his ideas, and the communication of his ſentiments, beſtowed a charm unknown before, and a new activity upon ſocial morality.

Franklin had formed men: He had conceived ſtill more noble projects—he wiſhed to create citizens. He had already completed the baſis, which is morality; he determined upon this to elevate the column of legiſlation. It is now the legiſlator whom I muſt exhibit, it is the electrician of nations that is about to begin his operations; it is he who compoſed and completed the moſt charming model of liberty that was ever preſented to the univerſe; and it is to France, now become free, it is before her firſt legiſlature that I am ambitious of exhibiting this picture; it will awaken ſlaves, it will tranſport Frenchmen!

PART II.

"TRAVELLER, inform Sparta that we have died "in obedience to her holy laws."

This inſcription over the bodies of thoſe who periſhed at Thermopylæ, is the moſt ſuperb monument that was ever erected to the honour of Greece: It proves

proves that antiquity recognized citizens in an angle of the world.

The city of Lacedemon, the only one which merits that appellation, on account of the ſeparation of the three powers which organiſed its government (for the anarchy of Athens, and the war of civic elements in Rome, prohibit them, although in other reſpects immortal, from enjoying this ſingular honour), the city of Lacedemon was deſtined to endure but a ſhort time, for it had not humanity for its baſis. Mankind themſelves were not as yet acquainted with it. It was neceſſary that whole ages ſhould firſt elapſe; and the Spartans, citizens without being men, were to be annihilated by the force of Nature, who does not long tolerate whatever contradicts her laws.

Methinks I now behold a more noble monument erected between the old and the new world: It riſes out of the boſom of the Atlantic ocean; it looks on one ſide towards Europe, and on the other towards America: The image of the auguſt Franklin ſurmounts it, and points to the following inſcription: "Men, love your fellow-men! Be free! Promote "commerce and the arts; but, above all, cultivate "humanity."

Legiſlator of mankind! thy countrymen, the Americans, obey thee; France liſtens to thy voice, ſhe repeats thy accents; the univerſe awakes at the ſound!

The light ſcattered over the world by the philoſopher of nature, from the city of Philadelphia, not only excited the ſcintillations of private, but it alſo

kindled

kindled the fire of public, virtue, which compoſes the life of nations.

From the banks of the Delaware and the Schuylkill, Franklin attentively ſurveyed the conduct of England, marked her errors and her imprudence, arouſed that juſt diſcontent which her cruelties inſpired, obſerved how far the patience of the people could be ſtretched, reinforced the principles of liberty, but yet preached up peace and moderation, until that day ſhould arrive, in which violence and injuſtice were no longer to be ſuffered, and a revolution was to be expected as an inevitable event. His wiſdom prophecied the approach of liberty, and accompliſhed it; his fellow-countrymen, the Americans, who felt the iron hand of deſpotiſm, but yet ſcarcely dreamed of independence, were already, in the calculations of his genius, the firſt free citizens of the univerſe.

The miniſters of England were well acquainted with the aſcendency of this great man, and were alarmed at his influence. In conformity to their ſyſtem of corruption, they were determined to bring him over to their views, and were perſuaded that, by beſtowing one of the lucrative employments upon him, which they had the diſpoſal of in the colonies, his private intereſt would induce him to aſſiſt them in ſubjugating his countrymen.

He was accordingly appointed Director General of the Poſt Office belonging to the Engliſh colonies in America*.

* He was entruſted with the ſouthern department only. TRANS.

In

In this employment he perceived that he could be uſeful to the people and to himſelf; for it furniſhed him with a better opportunity of communicating his principles throughout the continent. He well knew that his labours would accelerate the freedom of America; he was authoriſed by his office to viſit all the provinces without the leaſt ſuſpicion whatever; he thus was enabled to ſound the diſpoſitions of the inhabitants, to augment their horror for oppreſſion, and to induce them to reconquer the rights of man and of citizens.

Franklin undoubtedly foreſaw, while deſtroying an oppreſſive government, the favours of which he turned to the public advantage, that he ſhould make great ſacrifices in regard to his own private intereſt; but his natural ſimplicity and prudent œconomy had enabled him to accumulate a fortune ſufficient to inſure his independence; and he always dreaded great opulence, either to himſelf or his fellow-citizens.

He had always two great ideas in contemplation: The firſt was, to elevate England and all her colonies to the principles of civil liberty; and if that did not happen, at leaſt to give freedom to his native country. Had the former ſcheme ſucceeded (and it gave him the greater degree of pleaſure), the parliament of England was to have had a full national and colonial repreſentation. The King was to have carried the legal wiſhes of the fellow-citizens of the two continents into execution, and the perfect combina-

tion of the legiſlative power of all, and the executive power of one, would have realized to Great Britain that noble conſtitution deſtined to form the happineſs of France.

But if it were impoſſible thus to inſure the felicity of the whole empire, and if the ſyſtem of colonial oppreſſion was to be continued, then he thought that a grand example ought to be ſet by America to the world, that the cauſe of the people ought to be avenged, and that Liberty ought to hoiſt her ſtandard in another hemiſphere.

Thus all the views of this great man were in perfect coincidence with the principles of truth and of juſtice; for whatever might be the laſt determination of the oppreſſors, they themſelves would either become citizens, or enable their fellow ſlaves to become ſo, by eſtabliſhing the firſt free government that ever exiſted in the world.

Such was the poſition of public affairs when Franklin was ſent to England by the Aſſembly of Pennſylvania, in order to defend the colonies againſt the enterpriſes of the court. He did not diſſemble his opinions to the Engliſh miniſtry, who, at that period, were employing their uſual perfidious arts of bribery and corruption, in order to exact ſeveral new and vexatious impoſts from his countrymen.

Franklin announced to them the infallible reſult of their proceedings.

The Americans were alarmed, and proteſted with one accord againſt this act of tyranny. Their conduct

duct appeared to the generous patriots of England (where there are many good citizens, although they are not ſuffered to rule the nation) to be dictated by the juſt rights derived from oppreſſion; but it ſeemed to be the revolt of ſlaves, who wiſhed to free themſelves from the authority of a maſter, in the eyes of the ſervile minions of the ſovereign, who are more numerous, and who are always employed by the government.

Amidſt theſe important conjunctures, Franklin is ordered to the bar of the Houſe of Commons; he obeys. How great appeared that man, the defender of liberty, before an ariſtocracy who monopolize the independence of a nation! He was unacquainted with the queſtions which were to be put to him, but his mind was ever prepared. Not a ſingle vague idea, not an uſeleſs or unneceſſary word; thoughts ſimple, but yet vaſt; ſentiments loyal, but yet generous; the boldeſt aſſertions; the moſt convincing reaſons; the moſt poſitive denials, afforded no triumph to his enemies. With a maſculine eloquence and undiſguiſed truth, he proved all the firſt acts of the American inſurrection to be legitimate, and aſſerted that all the projects that could be ſuggeſted by Engliſh violence, would be abortive and without effect.

"Either let us be free together," ſays he, "or "we ſhall be ſo without, and even in ſpite of you. "If you do not annul your oppreſſive laws, we ſhall "continue to make new ones independent of you. "If you endeavour to ſubjugate us, we ſhall tri-"umph. Your armies? They are not numerous

" enough. Your navy? All the navies upon earth " are not capable of making us ſubmit to your will. " Make your election between our love and our " hate; we have already made our choice between the " liberty that is to combine us, and thoſe chains with " which we are to be manacled."

This affords but a feeble image of the dignified conduct of Franklin in the face of all England. Cyneas beheld at Rome, in that ſenate which governed Italy, an aſſembly of gods, and trembled! Franklin beheld at London, in that ſenate which commanded the ſeas of the two worlds, a corrupted legiſlature, and was undiſmayed. The ambaſſador of Theſſaly ſpoke in the name of a King; and what was a King before the Roman people? But the agent of Philadelphia ſpoke as a man in the name of men, whom he was about to render free; and free men have ever been reſpected as the firſt of human beings by the Engliſh!

He retired honoured by the nation, but deteſted by the Court, convinced that a parliament ſold to the miniſtry would ſmite America with the ſceptre of deſpotiſm, and ſupport their wrongs by the ſwords of mercenaries; that his countrymen would be forced to defend their own rights, to conſummate their independence, and to vindicate the cauſe of human nature.

Returned to his native continent, he revolved all theſe ideas in his boſom at Philadelphia. Waſhington and Adams enter into his views; the firſt congreſs

greſs is convoked and aſſembled; Franklin, or rather the Genius of Liberty, preſides at it; every thing is reſolved upon; new laws are enacted, but the principles of them already exiſt; all the coloniſts are citizens; the patriot troops are about to be called forth; they are already formed——all the citizens are ſoldiers!

The philoſopher of humanity, the friend of peace, Franklin had upwards of ten years before prepared all the plans of the inſurgent army. The number and order of the regiments and companies, the pay, the inſtructions, all the military details, written by his own hand two *luſtres* before the inſurrection, and depoſited in the archives of Philadelphia, atteſt at once the extent and foreſight of his ideas.

Advance, Engliſhmen; arm your fleets; pour in the warriors of your three kingdoms; tranſport the mercenaries of Germany to America, now become free; for Franklin preſides in her councils, and Waſhington regulates her armies! Wiſdom, and at length victory, declare againſt you.

By means of thoſe manœuvres which diſplay at once the ſkill and the ferocity of your bands of robbers, you redouble the energy of freemen, add to the horror againſt tyrants, and enſure to the United States but greater triumphs. The contraſt exhibited by the humanity of the citizens of America in the midſt of moſt of your moſt diſgraceful defeats, and the fury of your ſervile troops in their flight but impious ſucceſſes, ſhall change your glory to opprobrium, and the blood of a few peaceable men, immolated to your

rage, ſhall furniſh the ſeeds of victory for the combatants of liberty!

I ſhall not here enter into the expoſition of the ſagacious conduct, the profound combinations, the unexpected reſources, the invincible reſiſtance, the deciſive actions, the prodigies of glory, which have immortaliſed the campaigns of the armies of Independence.

They did not poſſeſs any metal, but iron; any military knowledge, but courage; any experience in combats, but a genius fitted for victory; any diſcipline proceeding from long previous preparation, but a General, who was all of a ſudden the creator of an army.

From men who wiſh to become free, from Franklin who directs, from Waſhington who commands, what is not to be expected?

However, even iron at laſt is wanting; it is procured from Europe. Officers are not in ſufficient abundance; they are invited from France.

Franklin, now in the ſeventieth year of his age, had juſt returned from Canada, where he had been drawn, during the moſt rigorous ſeaſon of the year, by the intereſts of the revolution, and, in the courſe of his journey, had traverſed, in company with Montgomery, the rivers and the lakes, at that time covered with ice. He is now appointed to proceed to France, in order to aſſiſt the efforts of Deane, and invite thoſe ſuccours which they were to procure from a generous people, who had ſubmitted, during a diſhonourable peace, to all the haughty pride, and all the intolerable outrages, of the Engliſh miniſtry.

He

He departs inſtantly, although he did not poſſeſs a ſingle piece of gold; for his country was deſtitute of money. He arrives at Paris with a cargo of tobacco, in the ſame manner as when Holland determined to become free, her deputies arrived at Bruſſels with a convoy of herrings, in order to pay their expences.

Admiration preceded, attachment followed him. Every tongue celebrated his name; every look was fixed upon, every heart leaped at the ſight of him: He ſpoke, he was liſtened to, and he ſucceeded. The treaty of commerce with the inſurgents is proclaimed; ammunition and warlike inſtruments are ſent from our ports—America receives them with gratitude; the free men of the new have now allies in the old world; they are ſoon alſo to have rivals, emulous to imitate, and, if poſſible, to excel them.

At the voice of Franklin, at the voice of glory, appear, young Fayette, or rather diſappear to Europe! Shew thyſelf to America, aſtoniſhed at thy noble daring; France ſhall not learn thy flight, but with the news of thy firſt victory in the country of liberty.

The furious Engliſh every-where attacked our veſſels; but they no longer poſſeſſed the advantage of thoſe perfidious ſtratagems which they had formerly made uſe of, before a declaration of war.

Our naval armaments were in readineſs; Orvilliers and Eſtaing command them. In one quarter * of the globe the Engliſh fleet experiences an invinci-

* This alludes to the engagement off Uſhant.

ble reſiſtance, and finds its only reſource to conſiſt in flight; in another† it meets with a ſignal defeat; and the Weſt-India iſlands ‡ are obliged to receive into their ports thoſe troops which were deſtined to conquer them. Paul Jones §, an American commander, takes ſeveral prizes upon the very coaſts of Great Britain; Rochambeau leads the French legions in the United States; La Fayette ¶ is the hero of the two nations; Waſhington is the arbiter of victory.

The independence of America is conſummated; England, in its turn, is conſtrained to ſue for peace. The ſovereignty of a great people is acknowledged, and from the banks of the Seine, Franklin, the harbinger, the director, and the very ſoul of this ſublime novelty in the univerſe, conferring all the glory upon thoſe who had the heroiſm of acquiring it by means of arms, receives, with the calmneſs of a philoſopher, the felicitations of America, of France, of the Engliſh patriots themſelves, and of all thoſe men who feel the godlike workings of humanity.

The ſovereignty of the nation is eſtabliſhed; this then is the moment to perfect their laws. The ambaſſador of America was its legiſlator; He had already prepared, and he now tranſmits to his fellow-citizens

† At Granada.

‡ Tobago, &c.

§ This officer, ſo celebrated during the American war, died lately in great poverty at Paris.

¶ The ſubſequent conduct of this General has converted the eulogiums of the patriot Biſhop of Calvados into *anathemas*.

the

the conſtitution of Pennſylvania, which connects it with all the eſtabliſhments of the confederated ſtates.

The rights of man are developed, for the firſt time, in laws ſimple and beneficent as thoſe of nature; the rights of citizens are elevated on the fundamental baſis of ſociety. The organization of the public power is combined with the private intereſt of every man, and the univerſal good of humanity, with the individual advantage of every patriot, and the general proſperity of the country.

The inſtitutions of Franklin are unanimouſly hailed as the code of wiſdom and beneficence. We have adopted them into the new laws of France, and we ought to regard their author as one of the founders of this ſacred conſtitution, which is about to attain all the elevation of reaſon and of juſtice, all the perfection of ſocial and natural order, and which will one day be the Pharos of the human kind.

Here, Gentlemen, the intereſt of this diſcourſe becomes augmented. It is my intention to compare America become independent, with France now free, and to preſage, from theſe circumſtances, the deſtinies of the univerſe.

I have already ſaid, and I repeat it again—The Anglo-Americans were the firſt great people who poſſeſſed the plenitude of liberty; the firſt that prepared itſelf to enjoy the perfection of freedom is the French nation; and in both theſe points of view Franklin is the firſt legiſlator of the world. Let the preſent and future generations hear and judge!

In

In Switzerland a ſenatorial ariſtocracy domineers; in Holland the Stadtholderate tends towards deſpotiſm; in England the people poſſeſs a corrupt, and but an inadequate, repreſentation: The Miniſter regulates the elections; a Houſe of Peers arreſts every thing at its will; the Court, by means of money, obtains money; by money, ſuffrages: In ſhort, in whatever point of view you are pleaſed to conſider the public welfare, the King hath an abſolute power over it. If there is a country in the world where there is a phantom of liberty idoliſed by the people, and no real liberty which they can love, it is there. But this very phantom had hitherto ſomething venerable in it. The imaginations of the Engliſh, exalted by the temporary glory of their country, beholding around her nothing but nations of ſlaves, who wiſhed to continue ſuch, they, with good reaſon, have looked upon themſelves, until now, as the people who poſſeſſed the firſt rank in the univerſe.

Franklin once ſaid to the Engliſh nation, "Admit "all the men who belong to your government in the "different parts of the globe, to a free competition "for, and an equal repreſentation in, your legiſla- "ture; let the King alone ſway the executive ſcep- "tre, and never be permitted to ſtretch it forth but "in the name of thoſe laws made by the repreſenta- "tives, and conſented to by the colonies and pro- "vinces; you will then poſſeſs the ſupreme ſocial "unity, and the grand monarchy of liberty. The "univerſe will all aſſimilate to your empire, or at "leaſt

" leaſt all the earth will be eager to imitate ſuch a " beautiful model; you will thus have the glory " of commencing the happineſs of the world, and " enſuring the fraternity of the human kind."

He ſpoke to thoſe who were reſolved to be deaf, who would not hear him, and who embraced nothing but a chimera of liberty in their own iſland, which they obſtinately perſiſted in ſupporting by a tyrannical domination abroad.

But America inclined her head, and liſtened to his voice. France, although ſtill crouching under her old and heavy fetters, ruminating even then in her thoughts the great leſſons of Mably and of Rouſſeau, lent an attentive ear, and ſaid—" The moment will " arrive, it faſt approaches, when that which Eng- " land had not the wiſdom to undertake, I ſhall have " the glory to execute."

In the mean time, the new States organize themſelves into a federate republic. Every other ſpecies of government was impracticable. The perfection ariſing from *unity* could not be expected from a multitude of independent provinces, of which each poſſeſſed the ſovereign right of adopting whatever form it pleaſed.

The mutual neceſſity of allying and connecting itſelf together, ſo as to form but one people, gave riſe to the Congreſs, which is deſtined to regulate thoſe vaſt objects that intereſt the whole of the States. Each province poſſeſſes its own proper legiſlative aſ-

ſembly,

ſembly, and alſo an independent power of executing its own decrees.

I repeat it once more, the Genius of Liberty reigns there in her full plenitude of glory; the union is happy, but the unity is not abſolute, and cannot be ſo. How is it poſſible to inſtitute a ſupreme chief? Each of the United States has an equal right to it; and moſt horrid diſſenſions would inevitably reſult from the ſole idea of a *King*.

The creation of a free monarchy, the moſt perfect of all poſſible governments, was reſerved for us.

Hail, France! vaſt, yet united, country; rear up thy immenſe body; break thy chains; let the thunder of thy liberty ſnap them in twain; let the Baſtile and all the fortreſſes of deſpotiſm fall and diſappear; let Fayette preſent himſelf as the ſoldier of his country; the ſon of France, the pupil of Waſhington; he ſhall continue a citizen until his death: Let the elected repreſentatives of all the claſſes of the empire, no longer form ſeparate orders, and let there be an abſolute equality, and, with the free competition of voices, a ſole legiſlature. Let them ſpeak in the name of the whole nation, and let the nation reply—"This "is our will!"

Beloved chief of the French! Monarch, who, in ſpite of thyſelf, haſt hitherto poſſeſſed but the falſe grandeur of the nation, ceaſe to be the powerleſs idol of a ſmall and abhorred *caſt* of oppreſſing deſpots, and become the reſpected ſovereign of twenty millions of freemen

freemen. Aſcend, and thou wilt be the firſt Prince in the world, who ever poſſeſſed that glory—aſcend the throne of the laws, and ſee not, within the large horizon of this empire, aught but that liberty which gives and maintains thee in full poſſeſſion of thy all-powerful ſceptre. Thou governeſt citizens; thou ruleſt over men; thou art a King, and the only one upon earth!

This perfection of human genius has hitherto been wanting; it was neceſſary that France ſhould ariſe, in order to reſolve the problem of ages, to organize ſocial order, in abſolute unity, and to preſent to her a chief impaſſible as a Divinity, and, like him, invariable in his juſtice!

Eternal Ruler of human occurrences! who, according to thy promiſe, wilt diſpoſe every thing in favour of our infant liberty *, it is thou who haſt accumulated in ſilence thoſe remarkable, prodigious, and miraculous events, in order to operate the creation of our happineſs.

But, in the combination of all thy benefits, the greateſt is, that thou haſt given us a Franklin, and connected us with an America; the moſt propitious is, that thou haſt placed in the balance of the deſtinies, the genius of the National Aſſembly, and the patriotiſm of Bailly † and La Fayette; the moſt happy is, that thou haſt in one day given liberty to

* Tu autem dominator virtutis .... cum magnâ reverentiâ diſponis nos. Sap. 12. 18.

† Then Mayor of Paris.

the

the capital and the provinces, and diſpoſed a King to embrace it.

O memorable ſucceſs! The ſurrounding nations can ſcarce give credit to the truth of it; but they begin to be moved at the ſight; their doubts ſeem to evaporate, and they at length believe that they may be happy.

Tyrants tremble; their reign has paſſed away; we have now brothers in ſentiment over all the earth. But a little longer, and, in a mutual independence and equal affection, the nations of the univerſe will be aſtoniſhed at being happy, and at finding themſelves Frenchmen!

Venerable old man, auguſt philoſopher, legiſlator of the felicity of thy country, prophet of the fraternity of the human race, what extatic happineſs embelliſhed the end of thy career! From thy fortunate aſylum, and in the midſt of thy brothers, who enjoyed in tranquillity the fruit of thy virtues, and the ſucceſs of thy genius, thou haſt ſung ſongs of deliverance. The laſt looks which thou caſt around thee, beheld America happy, France, on the other ſide of the ocean, free, and a ſure indication of the approaching freedom and happineſs of the world.

The United States, looking upon themſelves as thy children, have bewailed the death of the father of their republic; France, thy family by adoption, has honoured thee as the founder of her laws; and the human race has revered thee as the univerſal patriarch

triarch who has formed the alliance of nature with ſociety. Thy remembrance belongs to all ages; thy memory to all nations; thy glory to eternity *!

* M. Veillard, Intendant of the waters at Paſſy, who was very intimate with Franklin, has been kind enough, as well as the celebrated M. Fleury, to give me a variety of information relative to him; and this has ſerved as the baſis of the preſent Eulogium. I myſelf have alſo had the happineſs of being perſonally known to this great man, having often dined in company with him at the charming little villa belonging to M. Roy de Chaumont, at Paſſy. He aſſiſted at ſome of my ſermons, and has afforded me many teſtimonies of his eſteem. I might multiply the notes which authenticate the facts mentioned by me in this diſcourſe; but I rather chooſe to add, by way of appendix to this publication, a juſtificatory memorial, which M. le Roy, a Member of the Academy of Sciences, of the Royal Society of London, of the Philoſophical Society of Philadelphia, and Keeper of the King's Cabinet of Natural Hiſtory, has been ſo kind as to ſend me. It arrived too late to be uſed in the body of the preſent work; but it confirms all I have advanced; it contains a number of details I was ignorant of, and it cannot fail to intereſt the public, and give additional ſuppor to my labours.

TRANSLATION of a Letter from M. LE ROY *to the* Abbé FAUCHET (*now conſtitutional Biſhop of Calvados*), *relative to the late* Dr. FRANKLIN.

I AM enchanted to hear, Sir, that, elevating your mind above the vain prejudices of the vulgar, you have formed the noble deſign of pronouncing, in the metropolis of France, the funeral oration of my illuſtrious friend, who was born a Proteſtant.

Flattered with the confidence which you have been pleaſed to repoſe in me, I have endeavoured to comply with your wiſhes by tranſmitting you ſome particulars of the life of this great man; collected partly from what I can recollect in regard to him, and partly from what he himſelf has told me, in the numerous converſations we have had together.

It is neceſſary that the claſs of men, equally vain and imbecile, who wiſhed to eſtabliſh a privileged *caſt* among us, to whom alone the command of the armies, the venerable departments of juſtice, and the councils of the Sovereign were to be open; it is neceſſary they ſhould learn that Franklin, like the illuſtrious Flechier, was the ſon of a tallow-chandler; that he was born in Boſton; that he left it at fourteen years of age, much in the ſame manner as thoſe young men who, being impatient under the yoke of paternal authority, leave their fathers houſe in order to ſeek their fortune elſewhere; that he happened to go to Philadelphia, where, having preſented himſelf to

the only printer then reſiding in that city, he took a fancy to the boy, in whom he diſcovered a natural genius, and inſtructed him in the art of printing *.

I know that M. de la Rochefoucault, in the diſcourſe which he read before the ſociety of 1789 †, on the 13th of June laſt, gives us to underſtand that he was a journeyman printer in Boſton, and that he left it in order to ſeek for employment at New York and Philadelphia.

But, as well as I can remember, both from what he and his countrymen have told me, he arrived at Philadelphia in 1720, a period when the art of printing, ſo very curious in itſelf, was almoſt unknown to a great part of the country.

I have alſo learned, that the farmers who frequented that city, and who were fond of whatever was intereſting, were accuſtomed to viſit the printing-houſe in which young Franklin worked, and, being aſtoniſhed at his activity and addreſs, preſented him with many marks of their liberality.

Avaricious of knowledge, and poſſeſſing an inſatiable deſire after inſtruction, he eaſily perceived that, at the diſtance of two thouſand leagues from England, it was by books alone that he could gain information: But how could he procure them, when, at this pe-

* It may be neceſſary to obſerve here, that this and a number of other little miſtakes are corrected in Dr. Franklin's firſt and ſecond letters, Part. I.—*Note by the Tranſlator.*

† See page 237.

riod, there were not more than perhaps four or five hundred volumes in all Philadelphia?

By way of attaining knowledge, he formed a club conſiſting of ſome young men, who were of a ſimilar diſpoſition with himſelf, and, in order to have the advantage of each other's books, it was agreed that they ſhould place them in one common library. As this reſource was not attended with all the advantages at firſt expected from it, it was reſolved to ſubſcribe a ſmall ſum every month, to enable them to import all the new works from London.

The young people of Philadelphia having learned that this ſociety poſſeſſed a great number and variety of books, were exceedingly deſirous to borrow them; this was moſt readily conſented to, on condition of paying a trifle for the uſe of them, in order to augment their number. In ſhort, this new ſcheme was attended with ſo much ſucceſs, that their little collection ſwelled into a library; and the other colonies, perceiving the immenſe advantages ariſing from ſuch an eſtabliſhment, began to form ſimilar ones at Boſton, New York, Charleſtown, and ſeveral other places. Thus originated a number of the firſt libraries in America; and that at Philadelphia may, at this day, diſpute its conſequence with many of the moſt celebrated in Europe.

Pardon me, Sir, for entering into theſe details; for to me they appear intereſting, and even neceſſary, in order to point out how my illuſtrious friend has

not

not only been the founder, but, as it were, the ſchool-maſter, of American independence.

Thinking, however, that all the inſtruction he could acquire in his own country, was not ſufficient to conduct him to that point of perfection at which he wiſhed to arrive, he determined to viſit England, and accordingly arrived there about the year 1724 or 1725.

This much is certain, that he was there during the life of Newton, whom he told me he had ſeen ſeveral times, and who did not die until 1727 *.

He worked at his buſineſs as a printer in London; and it appears to me that he lived in very great obſcurity.

After a ſhort reſidence in the metropolis of England, he returned to America. It was at that period, if I am not greatly miſtaken, that he perſuaded the printer with whom he had formerly reſided to publiſh a newſpaper, in imitation of thoſe he had ſeen in London. This ſcheme was attended with ſucceſs, and the printer, to whom it brought in a large ſum, after having, out of gratitude, taken him into co-partnerſhip, gave him his daughter in marriage †.

From this marriage ſprung Mr. (commonly called Governor) Franklin, one of the principal American Loyaliſts, and Mrs. Beach, his favourite daughter, to whoſe family he has left the greateſt part

* March 20, 1726-27.

† This is another miſtake. See Chap. I. and II. Part I.

of his fortune *, having bequeathed but one or two farms to Mr. William Franklin, the ſon of the Loyaliſt, whom you have ſeen here.

Devoted

* Dr. Franklin's will was made during his reſidence in the village of Paſſy, near Paris.

It begins as follows:

"I Benjamin Franklin, printer, at preſent Miniſter Plenipotentiary from the United and Independent States of America to his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty Louis XVI. King of France, hereby declare my laſt will and teſtament," &c. &c.

The following articles will evince that this great man was not unmindful of poſterity:

"I was born in Boſton, New England, and owe my firſt inſtructions in literature to the two grammar-ſchools eſtabliſhed there. I have, therefore, conſidered thoſe ſchools in my will.

"But I am alſo under obligations to the State of Maſſachuſets, for having, unaſked, appointed me formerly their agent in England, with a handſome ſalary, which continued ſome years: And although I accidentally loſt in their ſervice, by tranſmitting Governor Hutchinſon's letters, much more than the amount of what they gave me, I do not think that ought in the leaſt to diminiſh my gratitude.

"I have conſidered that, among artiſans, good apprentices are moſt likely to make good citizens; and having myſelf been bred to a manual art, printing, in my native town, and afterwards aſſiſted to ſet up my buſineſs in Philadelphia by kind loans of money from two friends there, which was the foundation of my fortune, and of all the utility in life that may be aſcribed to me; I wiſh to be uſeful even after my death, if poſſible, in forming and advancing other young men that may be ſerviceable to their country in both thoſe towns.

"To this end, I devote two thouſand pounds ſterling; of which I give one thouſand to the inhabitants of the town of Boſ-

ton

Devoted entirely to his profeſſion during a large portion of his life, it appears that, ſoon after the treaty

ton in Maſſachuſets, and the other thouſand to the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia, in truſt, to and for the uſes, intents, and purpoſes, hereinafter mentioned and declared.

"The ſaid ſum of one thouſand pounds ſterling, if accepted by the inhabitants of the town of Boſton, ſhall be managed under the direction of the ſelect men, united with the Miniſters of the oldeſt Epiſcopalian, Congregational and Preſbyterian churches, in that town, who are to let out the ſame upon intereſt at five per cent. per annum, to ſuch young married artificers under the age of twenty-five years, as have ſerved an apprenticeſhip in the ſaid town, and faithfully fulfilled the duties required in their indentures, ſo as to obtain a good moral character from at leaſt two reſpectable citizens, who are willing to become their ſureties in a bond with the applicants for the repayment of the monies ſo lent, with intereſt, according to the terms hereinafter preſcribed; all which bonds are to be taken for Spaniſh milled dollars, or the value thereof in current gold coin. And the managers ſhall keep a bound book or books, wherein ſhall be entered the names of thoſe who ſhall apply for and receive the benefit of this inſtitution, and of their ſureties, together with the ſums lent, the dates, and other neceſſary and proper records, reſpecting the buſineſs and concerns of this inſtitution. And, as theſe loans are intended to aſſiſt young married artificers in ſetting up their buſineſs, they are to be proportioned by the diſcretion of the managers, ſo as not to exceed fifty pounds ſterling to one perſon, nor to be leſs than fifteen pounds.

"And if the number of appliers ſo entitled ſhould be ſo large as that the ſum will not ſuffice to afford to each as much as might otherwiſe not be improper, the proportion to each ſhall be diminiſhed, ſo as to afford to every one ſome aſſiſtance.

"Theſe aids may therefore be ſmall at firſt; but, as the capital increaſes by the accumulating intereſt, they will be more ample.

"And, in order to ſerve as many as poſſible in their turns, as well

treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, he found himſelf enabled, by the fortune he had acquired, to gratify his paſſion for

as to make the repayment of the principal borrowed more eaſy, each borrower ſhall be obliged to pay, with the yearly intereſt, one tenth part of the principal; which ſums of principal and intereſt ſo paid in, ſhall be again let out to freſh borrowers.

"And as it is preſumed, that there will be always found in Boſton virtuous and benevolent citizens, willing to beſtow a part of their time in doing good to the riſing generation, by ſuperintending and managing this inſtitution gratis, it is hoped that no part of the money will at any time lie dead, or be diverted to other purpoſes, but be continually augmented by the intereſt; in which caſe, there may in time be more than the occaſion in Boſton ſhall require, and then ſome may be ſpared to the neighbouring or other towns in the ſaid State of Maſſachuſetts, which may deſire to have it; ſuch towns engaging to pay punctually the intereſt and the proportions of the principal annually to the inhabitants of the town of Boſton.

"If this plan is executed and ſucceeds as projected, without interruption, for one hundred years, the ſum will then be one hundred and thirty-one thouſand pounds; of which I would have the managers of the donation to the town of Boſton then lay out, at their diſcretion, one hundred thouſand pounds in public works, which may be judged of moſt general utility to the inhabitants, ſuch as fortifications, bridges, aqueducts, public buildings, baths, pavements, or whatever may make living in the town more convenient to its people, and render it more agreeable to ſtrangers reſorting thither for health, or a temporary reſidence.

"The remaining thirty-one thouſand pounds I would have continued to be let out on intereſt in the manner above directed, for another hundred years, as I hope it will have been found that the inſtitution has had a good effect on the conduct of youth, and been of ſervice to many worthy characters and uſeful citizens.

"At the end of this ſecond term, if no unfortunate accident has prevented the operation, the ſum will be four millions and ſixty-

one

for ſtudy. From that period he alſo began to diſtinguiſh himſelf by the ſervices he performed to his native country.

The famous Leyden experiment having excited the attention of all the learned men in Europe; Mr. Collinſon, a Quaker of London, who was a Member of the Royal Society, tranſmitted ſome glaſs tubes to Mr. Franklin, and the other inſtruments neceſſary for making experiments in electricity. He employed theſe with ſo much ability and ſucceſs, as to be able, by means of their aſſiſtance, to accompliſh thoſe diſcoveries which have immortalized his memory.

Two of them particularly characteriſe his genius: The firſt is, the unequal diſtribution of the electric fluid in the human body; whence ariſe thoſe electrical *phenomena* which preſent themſelves to us The other, which is more grand, and more likely to afford aſtoniſhment, is the *para-tonnere*, or conductor.

It may not be unneceſſary here to ſay a few words on this ſubject, in order the better to develope the genius of my illuſtrious friend, and to aſcertain in what manner he contrived to make the moſt advantageous applications of certain *phenomena*, the conſequences to be deduced from which had eſcaped the penetration of other naturaliſts.

one thouſand pounds ſterling; of which I leave one million and ſixty-one thouſand pounds to the diſpoſition and management of the inhabitants of the town of Boſton, and three millions to the diſpoſition of the government of the State, not preſuming to carry my views further, &c."

Mr. Gray, an Engliſhman, had ſaid, a little before his death, that, if it were permitted to compare ſmall things with great, he dared to affirm that electricity and thunder were one and the ſame thing. It was in 1735 that this Gentleman, to whom electricity is under great obligations, hazarded this bold compariſon. The more the *phenomena* multiplied, the better did this theory appear to be founded.

But how was it poſſible to paſs that immenſe interval between us and the clouds? It had been diſcovered in America that pointed ſubſtances drew the electric fluid from electric bodies, from a much greater diſtance, than the bodies which have other ſhapes. Mr. Franklin inſtantly reaſons upon this idea, and ſays—if the cauſe of thunder be the ſame as that of electricity; if the clouds, during a tempeſt, are replete with this fluid; there is nothing more to be done than to preſent a pointed ſubſtance upon an elevated place, and this will infallibly be electrified during a ſtorm.

This great and ſuperb conjecture appeared extravagant to thoſe who do not know how to raiſe themſelves above vulgar opinions.

Notwithſtanding this, a man was found in France (M. Dalibard), who had the courage to attempt the verification of this experiment; and, on the tenth of May 1752, a tempeſt which took place at Marly-la-Ville, where the apparatus was erected, juſtified, at one and the ſame time, the hardy conjecture of my illuſtrious friend, and the courage of M. Dalibard, who

who had been tempted to try whether it was well founded or not.

In a ſhort time, this new and grand experiment was diſcloſed to all Europe, and a variety of obſervations confirmed what M. Dalibard had firſt ſeen. Thus I am of opinion, Sir, that, if you ſhould think proper to mention this ſublime diſcovery in your diſcourſe, you can ſay, it was in France that this experiment was made for the firſt time, and that it was conſequently an honour reſerved for us.

From this diſcovery to the conductor, or *para-tonnere*, there is but a ſingle ſtep; for if points, in preference to all other figures, attract electric matter from the clouds, it will inconteſtably follow, that a pointed conductor, elevated above a building, will poſſeſs this advantage; and that if this could tranſmit, immediately and without any obſtacle, this electric matter to the earth, its common reſervoir, by means of a metal chain, no accident could reſult from it, and a houſe might, by theſe means, be entirely preſerved from the ravages of the thunder.

The new and hardy ideas conceived by Mr. Franklin found much oppoſition in England. Notwithſtanding this, when he reviſited that country in 1755, ample juſtice was done to his merits, and the Royal Society decreed him the golden medal, which it awards annually to the authors of thoſe memoirs containing intereſting and uſeful diſcoveries. On this occaſion, he was received with great attention and reſpect; and, much about the ſame period, he was

admitted Doctor of Laws at one of the Engliſh Univerſities *. War having broke out in the ſucceeding year between England and France, he returned to America, and was much employed in public buſineſs.

He has often mentioned to me that, having been appointed a captain of artillery, the matroſſes who ſerved under him inſiſted upon doing him honour by firing a ſalute before his door, which broke all the china in his houſe.

We are now arrived at that moment when he may be conſidered as a public man. Having been nominated agent for the province of Pennſylvania, he returned to England about the year 1761. At this period there was a prodigious fermentation in the minds of the people of America.

The act enforcing a duty on tea had irritated them exceedingly; and the Boſton-port bill, which was enacted ſoon after, entirely completed the diſcontent of the Colonies.

At length it was reſolved that the agent of Pennſylvania, as well as the agents of the other provinces, ſhould be called to the bar of the Houſe of Commons, in order to anſwer certain interrogatories concerning the population of America, the diſpoſition of the people in regard to the Parliament of England, and the reaſons of their reſiſtance to the late impoſts.

It was on this occaſion that my illuſtrious friend diſtinguiſhed himſelf, by the clearneſs, the force, and the preciſion of his reaſons, and made himſelf known

* Oxford.

to

to all Europe as a great man. I ſaw him a few months after in Paris; and M. Maleſherbes very juſtly remarked, when I preſented him to that gentleman, that he was the firſt learned man who had diſcovered extraordinary talents for politics. This was an advantage he derived from the nature of the government under which he lived, as it permitted the efforts of the human mind to be directed towards thoſe important objects which have for their object the happineſs and the felicity of the people.

Had this man been born in Paris, under our ancient ſyſtem, he would have remained for ever in obſcurity: How would it have been poſſible to have employed the ſon of a tallow-chandler? Indeed, if his genius for the ſciences had forced the barriers oppoſed by his birth, he might have been elected a member of an academy!

Ought it not to be readily allowed by every body, that population being one of the moſt important objects for a State, a too great competition and rivalſhip for employments can never be dreaded; and that the probability of poſſeſſing citizens capable of worthily preſiding in the different departments, augments always in proportion to the number of candidates who aſpire to the honour of filling them?

I now return to my illuſtrious friend: I have only permitted myſelf to make this digreſſion on account of the indignation with which an abſurd ariſtocratical tyranny, that deſignated and confined the employments of a kingdom to a particular *ſect*, has ever inſpired me.

me. What renders this ſtill more inſufferable is, that this very ſect was much leſs capable, and leſs inſtructed, than that of the *third Eſtate*, which had been ſo much deſpiſed.

The replications of Franklin added new force to the reſolutions of the Colonies, and augmented the number of the partizans which they already had in Parliament. But ſuch was the obſtinacy of the men who ſurrounded the King of Great Britain, that they inſiſted on laying impoſts upon the Americans, in direct oppoſition to the ſpirit of that very law, which ſays that the citizens can never be taxed but by their own conſent.

At length the Americans determine to aſſemble a Congreſs.

About this time, my illuſtrious friend, who had formerly poſſeſſed great influence with the Engliſh Miniſtry (for he had been able to procure the appointment of Governor of New Jerſey for his ſon), began to loſe all his intereſt at Court; and Mr. Wedderburne (now Lord Loughborough), who was at that time Attorney General, and a true *ariſtocrat*, permitted himſelf to treat him with great inſolence and haughtineſs. It was even ſaid, that there was an intention of impriſoning him.

Perceiving at length that his reſidence in England could be no longer uſeful to his countrymen, he reſolved to leave it, and concerted his meaſures with ſo much addreſs, that he had embarked and was actually at ſea, in the beginning of the year 1775, at the very time

time that he was thought, by his enemies, to be ſtill in England.

The events of that period are well known. Every body recollects that, in June or July 1776, America declared herſelf independent; and that ſhe took all the meaſures in her power to aſſert and ſecure her ſovereignty. I beg leave to obſerve, however, that it was towards the cloſe of July, or the beginning of Auguſt, that Mr. Deane, who came from America in order to negotiate with the Court of France, and Mr. Bencroft, who came from England to aſſiſt him in his labours, met at my houſe.

Franklin, as every body knows, was one of the moſt ſtrenuous ſupporters of American liberty, and was perpetually buſied in preparing every thing for that great revolution which was about to give freedom to his country.

The Congreſs ſent him to Canada in the autumn of 1776, to negotiate with the inhabitants, and engage them to make a common cauſe with the Colonies, in order to throw off the yoke of England. But the Canadians were ſo diſguſted with the exceſſes committed by their neighbours, the Preſbyterians of New England, who had deſtroyed and burnt ſeveral of their chapels, that they could never be prevailed upon to liſten to the propoſitions of the Colonies, although ſupported with all the energy which he knew how to give to every thing with which he was entruſted.

Fana-

Fanaticiſm is an enemy to the happineſs of mankind, and is to be found in all religions; the Preſbyterians of the Engliſh Colonies have preſerved, from their very original, a certain gloomineſs and ſpirit of tyranny in their character, which they not only diſplayed then againſt the Canadians, but upon many other occaſions.

Having failed on this occaſion, Dr. Franklin returned to Philadelphia, and the Congreſs knowing the conſideration which he enjoyed in Europe, and the reputation which he had acquired by his philoſophical diſcoveries, entruſted him with a miſſion to France, where he was to put the laſt hand to the negotiations which Mr. Deane had already commenced in a ſecret manner.

Although now in the ſeventy-firſt year of his age, he accepted this delicate and important commiſſion, and arrived at Paris about the ſixteenth of December 1776.

The ſucceſs of the Americans in the northern provinces, and the defeat of General Burgoyne by General Gates, in the autumn of 1777, at length determined our Court to give a more favourable hearing to the propoſitions of the Congreſs; and, either towards the end of this year, or the beginning of 1778, the treaty of alliance and commerce with the States of America was ſigned, a circumſtance which led us into a war with England.

I flatter myſelf, that I in ſome meaſure contributed towards the ſigning of this treaty; for, knowing the

efforts

efforts made by the Engliſh in order to induce the inſurgents to return under the yoke of the mother-country, I informed M. Maurepas of this circumſtance, by means of one of my particular friends, telling him, at the ſame time, that there was not a moment to be loſt, if he wiſhed to preſerve the alliance of the Americans, and detach them from Great Britain.

Never did I ſee a mortal ſo happy, ſo joyous, as Franklin, on the day when Lord Stormont, Ambaſſador from England, left Paris, on account of the rupture with our Court. We dined together; and he who was uſually very calm and tranquil, appeared to me, on that day, to be quite a new man.

At length, in conſequence of a ſeries of the moſt fortunate events, in leſs than ſeven years, North America became free, and my illuſtrious friend had the happineſs and the glory, in 1783, of ſigning, along with the Engliſh Commiſſioners, that peace which recogniſed the independence of his country.

Until that period, he had enjoyed a good ſtate of health, and was free from any complaint whatever, except that he was ſubject to the gout. In 1782, he had a very violent fit, which was accompanied with a very grievous nephritic colic. This appears to have been the origin of the ſtone, with which he was afterwards tortured; for, in the courſe of the year 1783, he ſuffered ſeveral very violent attacks, and, from that epoch, they continued daily to augment.

As

As his mind was full of reſources, and calculated for every ſituation in life, he found means, in ſome meaſure, to alleviate the violence of his pains, and render his malady more ſupportable.

His wiſhes being now fully accompliſhed, and peace concluded, he ſighed after the moment when he might once more reviſit his native country. He accordingly requeſted ſeveral times to be recalled by Congreſs: But how was it poſſible to replace him? However, that illuſtrious body, on his reiterated applications, nominated Mr. Jefferſon Miniſter to our Court; and certainly they could not have made a better choice, nor appointed a man more worthy to ſucceed my illuſtrious friend.

His ſucceſſor having at length arrived*, he reſolved to depart. It was not an eaſy matter to repair to Havre, in

* "I found the Miniſters of France (ſays Mr. Jefferſon) equally "impreſſed with Dr. Franklin's talents and integrity. The Count "de Vergennes, particularly, gave me repeated and unequivocal de- "monſtrations of his entire confidence in him.

"When he left Paſſy, it ſeemed as if the village had loſt its *pa-* "*triarch*. On taking leave of the Court, which he did by letter, "the King ordered him to be handſomely complimented, and fur- "niſhed him with a *litter* and *mules* of his own, the only kind of "conveyance that the ſtate of his health could bear.

"The ſucceſſion to Dr. Franklin, at the Court of France, was "an excellent ſchool of humility to me. On being preſented to "any one as the Miniſter of America, the common-place queſtion "was, *C'eſt vous, Monſieur, qui remplacez le Docteur Franklin?*— "'Is it you, Sir, who replaces Dr. Franklin?' I generally an-

"ſwered

in order to embark; he, however, made a ſhift to reach the place of his deſtination in carriages ſupplied by the Court. From that port he ſet ſail for Newport, in the Iſle of Wight, and, after a ſhort and agreeable paſſage, he arrived at Philadelphia in September 1785, amidſt the acclamations of an immenſe crowd of ſpectators, who were eager to ſee him, and who accompanied him from the place where he landed to his own houſe.

A few days after his arrival, the Members of the Congreſs, and all the eminent people in Philadelphia, and the adjacent country, waited upon him. In a ſhort time, he was elected, for two years following, Preſi-

ſwered—' No one can replace him, Sir; I am only his ſuc-
" ceſſor.'

" A little before my arrival in France, Argand had invented
" his celebrated *lamp*, in which the flame is ſpread into a hollow
" cylinder, and thus brought into contact with the air, within as
" well as without. Dr. Franklin had been on the point of the
" ſame diſcovery. The idea had occurred to him; but he had
" tried a bull-ruſh as a wick, which did not ſucceed. His occu-
" pations did not permit him to repeat and extend his trials to the
" introduction of a larger column of air than could paſs through
" the ſtem of a bull-ruſh.

" About this time, alſo, the King of France gave him a ſignal
" teſtimony of reſpect, by joining him with ſome of the moſt
" illuſtrious men of the nation, to examine that *ignis fatuus* of phi-
" loſophy, the *animal magnetiſm* of the *maniac* Meſmer; the pre-
" tended effects of which had aſtoniſhed all Paris. From Dr.
" Franklin's hand, in conjunction with his brethren of the learned
" committee, that compound of fraud and folly was unveiled, and
" received its death-wound."

dent of the Aſſembly of Philadelphia; but at length his great age, and the malady with which he was attacked, precluding him entirely from the adminiſtration of public affairs, he demanded and obtained leave to retire, in order to paſs the remainder of his life in tranquillity amidſt his fellow-citizens, to offer up vows for their proſperity, and to occupy himſelf entirely with his beloved ſtudy, which was natural hiſtory.

There is one thing which I have forgotten to mention to you, Sir; it is, that, during his paſſage to America, he wrote a long memorial, addreſſed to my brother, full of excellent ideas relative to the improvement of ſhip-building.

You have heard of the honours that were paid to him after his death. They are ſuch as he merited, and ſuch as a free people ought to render to the memory of a man, who had made them ſo by the pains he had taken to elevate their minds, and to inſtruct them relative to their own rights. I have a variety of facts to add; but this letter is already too long. I beg leave to tell you truly, and by way of excuſe, that I have not had time to ſhorten it, having a thouſand other things to do at the preſent moment; as to the reſt, I beg you will look upon this as the *Sylva Sylvarum* of Bacon, in which he had aſſembled every thing that he thought could be ſerviceable to his great edifice of philoſophy. As for me, I have endeavoured to collect all the facts that may contribute to the oration you are about to pronounce in honour of my illuſtrious friend.

I cannot

I cannot avoid adding a few words more, relative to the character of his genius, and the temper of his mind. Tranquil, calm, and circumſpect, like the generality of his countrymen, he could never be reproached during his reſidence here, and amidſt the moſt delicate and embarraſſing circumſtances, with having uttered a ſingle word, or expreſſion, which could be quoted againſt him. This is a very uncommon circumſtance, when we conſider the part he acted, and the number of ſpies who watched every look and every ſentence.

He poſſeſſed all the courage neceſſary for great events; and it was that firm courage which appertains to elevated minds, which, after having conſidered every thing, looks upon events as the neceſſary and inevitable conſequence of the order of human affairs.

In regard to his mind, it had this peculiar characteriſtic, which has not hitherto been ſufficiently attended to; I mean the faculty of obſerving and examining things, in the moſt ſimple manner poſſible. In his philoſophical and political inquiries, he always looked at the queſtion, in its moſt natural point of view. This was invariably the ſame, whether the ſubject was philoſophical or mechanical.

In fine, while the bulk of mankind arrive only at what is true and ſimple, by a circuitous road and multiplied efforts, the ſuperiority of his genius enabled him, by the moſt eaſy means, to explain the *phenomena* under diſcuſſion, to conſtruct a machine for which he had occaſion; or, in ſhort, to diſ-

discover the most proper expedients for the success of those plans, projects, and experiments, with which his thoughts were so frequently occupied.

I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect,

SIR,

Your very humble, and

Most obedient servant,

LE ROY.

FINIS.